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**IRAN-OTTOMAN/IRAQ CONFLICTS
SINCE 1514
AND THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of The Nottingham Trent University
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

Political developments in the northern Persian Gulf region have been dominated by the conflicts between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, and latterly Iraq and Iran. There has been a complex overlay of nationalist aspiration, religious belief and expansionist invasions. The major research question addressed in this study is: what have been the constituent factors in the Ottoman/Iraq-Iran conflicts, from 1514 until the present day?

This question refers mainly to the history of the conflicts. It raises the issues of the circumstances in which these conflicts arose. Moreover, when opportunities arose for peaceful settlements, how did external interests disrupt the achievement of such settlement? A theoretical debate on the causes of conflicts, based on a historical realist understanding, which benefited from the writing of Thucydides about the Peloponnesian Wars¹ and the famous Kenneth Waltz's discussion on Man, the State and War,² is presented here.

However, in answering this question a second specific question needs to be addressed. This deals with the political history of European capitalist expansion into the Middle East. The question is: How were European trade ambitions in the East developed into a dominant and asymmetrical relationship affecting Ottoman/Iraq-Iran relations? The study therefore also explores the rivalries between the European powers prior to the twentieth century and those later in the twentieth century, between the superpowers and the effects these had on Middle Eastern social, political and economic developments. More specifically, the thesis examines the process of state building in the wake of Ottoman demise. This study will argue that the Ottoman collapse was to facilitate future external expansionist policies.

However, as far as the first question – the causes of conflicts – is concerned, these conflicts caused gradual deterioration of social, economic developments of the

¹ Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, Trans: By Rex Warner, (Penguin Books, England, 1959).

² Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, The State and War*, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1959).

region, compared with those underway in Europe. Therefore, the ground for the future European capitalist expansion into the region in the 200 years was prepared.

The Europeans, especially the British, established cordial relations with local powers and regional courts through influence and often bribery. By doing so, their original trade ambition changed its nature to the political and economic domination first – in the nineteenth century – and influence later – in the twentieth century.

European policies were based on their diplomatic skills, financial facilities, technologies, on deceptions and their military might if necessary. They used commercialisation and state-building processes to facilitate the integration of the Middle East into the evolving world capitalist system as this was generated from Europe.

However, the European dominance and influences inserted a strong element of change into the economies, and later on the geo-politics of the Middle East. The British strategy was based on safeguarding the Indian sub-continent, as this was threatened with Russian and then by French and German interests. These rivalries exacerbated the asymmetrical relations between the capitalist world and the Middle East.

The econo-geopolitics of oil, the Russian Revolution of 1917, the impact of two great wars on international politics, highlighted the importance of the Middle East in international affairs. Policies of external powers were largely responsible for the development of asymmetrical relations. However, regional conflicts prepared the ground for European exploitation. On the other hand, regional policies played a notable role in resisting external policies, sometimes with success and often with failure.

Nationalist aspirations in the region after the Second World War, OPEC's obstructive activities to Western energy policies (reaching greatest impact in the early 1970s), the Algiers Agreement (1975) between Iran and Iraq (with consequences for peace and the geo-politics of the region), and the accumulation of petro-dollars earned by oil-producing countries were becoming a matter of concern for the capitalist world.

Regional political arrangements developed in the 1940s could not contain the radical changes in the 1970s Middle East. The Pahlavi demise, the eight years war

between Iran and Iraq, the ineffectiveness of OPEC, were perhaps the least unwelcome possible events. They served to release pressure on the West's economies.

Ironically, Western strategy in the 1970s, based on religious representations all over the world against the 'heretic' East, coincided with the rise of a theocratic government in Iran.³

The study, therefore, prepares the reader for a concise five centuries history of the region and its developments, with special regard to the prosecution of European capitalist policies in the last three centuries. The main features of these developments are investigated and their causes are revealed. The reader will also be informed about different intellectual insights and scholarly responses to these developments in both Europe and the Middle East.

³

For the first time in 456 years, the Pope was chosen from a non-Italian and more significantly communist country. For more details of CIA plots in co-operation with the Pope, refer to: Bernstein, Carl and Marco, *Politics, His Holiness, Pope John Paul II and the Hidden History of Our Time*, (Doubleday, New York, 1996).

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CHAPTER I

THE RESEARCH

The theorists' job is to offer a critical interpretation of the understandings and commitments that he shares with his fellow citizen.

(Michael Walzer, *Sphere of Justice*.)

Prologue

The following thesis attempts to present and examine the vast esoteric history of a nation, which for many in the West appears beyond comprehension, or unique almost to the point of obscurity. Within this undertaking I have attempted to do something very unusual by taking an approach that seeks to increase the knowledge in the area by being simultaneously rooted in objective originality and subjective personal experience. In this case, the personal becomes part of the works originality, as I myself participated in much of what follows in these pages. It is therefore in part, both an eye-witness account and a neutral observation of facts informed by my own observations and experience.

However this is not the works only claim to originality. This thesis sets out to examine a topic that is much under-explored, particularly with regard to English language literature sources. Whilst a number of Farsi and foreign language texts provide information on the subject, this thesis is the first to examine and provide excerpted English translations of these works. In addition, I have also researched and cited a large body of rarely seen official documentation from source.

Furthermore, I have tried throughout these pages to suggest possible alternative courses that could have been taken in order to avert the tragedies that

now make up our history. It is in light of these argumentation's that I offer suggestions for the future and the personal hope that one-day, perhaps my part of the world will live in a diplomatically achieved co-operative peace.

1.1 Introduction

The introduction to this chapter is divided into five parts. The first deals with the research questions posed and the methodology used in approaching them. The second gives a brief historical survey of the period under research. The third and fourth parts deal with theoretical insights into the causes of conflict and the intellectual debate between Eastern and Western scholars in comparing the under-development of the East with the progress of Europe. The last part relates to the organisation of the thesis.

On 13th June 1975 the Algiers agreement between Iraq and Iran was signed in Baghdad. The Agreement came as something of a shock to most countries around the world given the stormy and often difficult historical relations that had existed between the two countries.

This Agreement - combined with the decision taken by the OPEC Conference in Tehran in 1971, the 1973 oil embargo and the dramatic rise in oil prices - was to herald a momentous change in the social, political and economic structures of the Middle East. The Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, the Iraq-Iran war in the 1980s, and finally the "Desert-Storm" operation, were challenges to the economic, political and social developments that arose in the region during the 1970s. The OPEC decision, the subsequent oil embargo, and the new oil prices all served as a foretaste of, and a change towards more inward-looking regional policies. The unwarranted consequences of the Algiers' Agreement and the effect it had on both the regional balance of power and on the OPEC decision-making process mark it out as a massive turning point in the

regional development of the area. This in turn gave rise to inevitable political changes in the region, changes that appeared incongruous with, and even antithetical to, the established capitalist world order.

Although the Algiers Agreement had initially received the tacit blessing of the Western countries, it soon became clear that the old political and economic relationship between the Middle East and the West would no longer be able to accommodate the new political and economic changes in the region.

The Middle Eastern market had become saturated with Western manufactured goods and military equipment by the mid 1970s. As a result cordial relations between Iran and Iraq would have had dramatic and profound consequences, not just for the balance of power and political developments in the region, but also within OPEC and the international oil market at large. The petro-dollar surplus that was accruing in Western banks was becoming a major point of concern for Western countries.¹

However, a historical review of these two countries and the relations between them, as well as a study of social, economic and political developments in the Middle East, are fundamental to a complete comprehension of politics in this region. Furthermore, in order to provide a background and contextual framework within which to understand these points, the conflicts between the Ottoman Empire/Iraq and Iran, since the sixteenth century, will also be reviewed and their causes explained.

European interest in the Asian East has long centred on the geo-political importance of the Middle East. Consequently, it has been the concerns of external interests that have dictated the economic and political developments within this region. This geo-strategic position has historically seen the region assume a role of importance with regard to British interests in India, the discovery of oil in 1908, the demise of the

¹ "In 1974-78 the oil producers received some \$500 billion, a staggering sum." Charles Issawi, *An Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa*, (Columbia University Press, USA, 1982), p.207.

Ottoman Empire, the Russian Revolution of 1917, all of which have left their mark on its political, economic and state-building processes.

At the end of the Second World War, the dominant international power centres had shifted from Europe to North America and the USSR. The emergence of newly independent and liberated countries in Asia and Africa, and later Latin America, also added new elements to the changing world order. The emergence of India as an independent nation in August 1947 was a major event in the post-war process of liberating subject peoples in what had come to be known as the "Third World".² The old colonial systems had begun to crumble as nationalist movements embraced the concept and ideal of an open and liberated world. Imperialist relations between Europe and the Third World were put into terminal decline. Iranian oil nationalisation and the revolutions in Egypt and Iraq in the 1950s, were at the vanguard of a new era in Middle East politics, one which the capitalist world would have to increasingly contend with.

The security of Israel, which, according to Simon Bromley is, "a counter to the radical régimes in the region",³ constitutes another aspect governing western policies and attitudes towards the Middle East. With a secure Israel, "the resulting Arab-Israel/Muslim-Jewish conflict has played a major rôle in bolstering the position of military and authoritarian forces in the Arab-Islamic states."⁴

The containment of Soviet expansionism and preventing the spread of communist ideology were other overarching principles dictating the West-East strategy. However, Western concerns were primarily centred on the ability to secure a reliable flow of oil at market-managed prices and the safe lodgement of petro-dollar earnings which as a result lead to a wide range of debates on the character of political and socio-economic changes in the Middle East.

² Gopal Krishna, 'India and the International Order', in *The Expansion of International Society*, ed. in Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1992), p.269.

³ Simon Bromley, *Rethinking Middle East Politics*, (Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, UK, 1994), p.88.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.88.

1.2 Research questions and research approach

A. The research questions:

The two main questions that form the preliminary part of the study are:

(i) What were the constituent factors in the Ottoman/Iraq-Iran conflicts since 1514?

(ii) How had the asymmetrical relationship that had developed between the Middle Eastern countries and the Capitalist world, as a result of expanded European trade ambition, affected Iran-Iraq relations?

(i) The first question deals exclusively with the conflicts that arose as a result of the social, political and economic developments that occurred simultaneously in both Iran and the Ottoman Empire. Shah Ismael, founder of the Safavid Dynasty in 1501, decided to declare and institutionalise 'Shi'ism' as the official religion of Iran. This was an affront to the Ottoman authorities who followed the 'Sunni' branch of Islam, and were generally hostile towards the 'Shi'a' religion. Shah Ismael attacked all 'Sunni' shrines in the Eastern parts of the Ottoman Empire, and in so doing set the stage for the 1514 conflict between the two countries and sowed the seeds for centuries of hatred and wars to come. What also needs to be highlighted in this context is the crucial role played by the clergy in these disputes. They consider themselves to be the guardians of their respective shrines and faith and as such act as both the focus and inspiration for ensuing disputes.

Moreover, the opportunistic inclinations on both sides also acted as a motivating factor encouraging invasion. According to Paul Kennedy, the underlying cause of the dispute was the Ottoman expansionist policies, which was to become the main cause of later conflicts,⁵

⁵ Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers, Economic Change and Military Conflicts from 1500 to 2000*, (Fontana Press, London, 1989), pp.10-16.

The Ottoman Turks, too, were to falter, to turn inward, and to lose the chance of world domination, although this became clear only a century after the strikingly similar Ming decline. Considering the lack of economic benefit, compared with Spanish or English etc. coming from her expansion, the Ottoman could hardly expand further, without enormous costs in men and money.⁶

(ii) The second question deals with relationships between the West and Middle East since the early sixteenth century focusing on a number of key areas. Central here is an examination of the integration and development that occurred through trade, commercialisation and the state-building processes. Following on, the internal and external policies of rentier states are counterposed against the overall strategy of the Capitalist west.⁷ Finally, the insights gleaned from both these undertakings are combined and evaluated in the final part of the study.

The paucity of literature in relation to the overall history and record of conflicts between Ottoman/Iraq and Iran is in itself fertile ground for a study and research programme. The findings of this research could perhaps constitute the basis for an intellectual programme that would attempt to establish and formulate a functionalist approach to current relations based on mutually agreed grounds. The benefits of such an undertaking provides the possibility of eradicating the present hostile attitudes of these countries towards each other and replacing them with new insights that could in time lead to understanding and co-operation. For this to occur however the main causes of hostility have to be identified and discussed. The primary causes of dispute are religious prejudices, counter-nationalist dispositions, adventurism, shifting allegiances across

⁶ Ibid., pp.10-16.

⁷ 'Rentier' is French in origin and is derived from 'rent' meaning interest. Here it means income of the oil producing countries externally derived and which is not totally or mainly accounted for by the costs of production. A rentier *economy* is one that is disproportionately dependent on oil revenues, in the absence of a proportionately significant alternative production base. A rentier *State* is one where command of rentier incomes is restricted to a narrow group (ruling and/or class), generating gross unequal distribution and consumption. Cf. Hazem Beblawi, *The Rentier State in the Arab World*, in ed. Giacomo Luciani, *The Arab State*, (Routledge, London, 1990), pp.87-88.

political governors' borders, and Ottoman expansionist policies.

Social, economic and political developments in the Middle East are firstly to be viewed against the initial trade ambitions of European adventurers in the East. These form the origin and basis of the asymmetrical relationship that was to develop between these two geo-political regions. This unequal inter-dependency is a result of the gradual development of Western pretensions and desire for domination and absolute influence in the Middle East. This formed part of a world-wide European capitalist expansionist programme that began to develop in the sixteenth century. Analysing these developments and explaining their causes should lead to an elucidation of the dilemmas involved in Middle East economic, social and political relations.

B. The research approach:

This thesis locates and sets out to examine, from an original and personal perspective, the 1970s as the period when the region almost managed to escape dependency and to achieve an autonomous diplomatic stasis and stability. However, before arriving at this point we must examine previous writings and theoretical perspectives pertaining to the Middle East.

Serious political and social study of the Middle East, by both Western and Middle Eastern intellectuals and academics, has been conducted for almost three hundred years.⁸ These studies may be referred to as "the dominant traditional intellectual studies of the East" from which two conceptual themes may be identified. First, there is the 'culturalist' genre that considers 'Islam' to be the distinctive and the main characterising feature of the Middle East. This notion carries with it many essentialist implications such as the accusation that Islam is symptomatic of pre-

⁸ Much attention in other modes had, of course, been paid for many centuries before.

modernism and the main cause of underdevelopment in the region. The second theme is roughly derived from a 'Weberian sociological' perspective and is centred on the perceived opposition of 'oriental' and 'occidental' characteristics underwriting the cultures and relative developments of the 'East' and 'West'. The rationality, secularity and 'modernity' of the West are historically juxtaposed with the theology and "irrational despotism" that are said to define the East.

Neither of these themes offers a comprehensive understanding of the Middle East. The main causes of underdevelopment in this region must be found elsewhere. In essence what is needed is an approach which attempts to eliminate a myriad of historical facts and seeks to avoid features that have already received excessive attention, in order to concentrate on the region's historical development.

In common with developments in the region, and the Third World in general, social reproduction and material transformation in the Middle East have been mediated through commercialisation and state-building processes. These processes largely explain the modern relations of the Middle East with the outside world.

This approach by-passes both the culturalist propositions and Weberian sociology, with their aforementioned weaknesses, and follows what I term a unideological path. In essence this reflects a historical materialist interpretation of the politics of the region and its contacts with the outside world in particular the capitalist West. The approach is therefore defined as 'realist', not in the sense of Morgenthau's pursuit of national interest, but in the pursuit of economic interest, and stability as a precondition for active engagement in a progressively internationalising system.

However, it seems practical that the general framework of this study be divided into four periods: 1514-1800, 1800-1920, 1920-1945 and 1945-2000. The last three time frames are the periods of aggressive penetration and capitalist expansion in the region.

The first period saw the occurrence of the greatest number of conflicts between Iran and Ottoman. Although capitalism was in its initial phase of expansion, driven by new technology in manufacturing and transportation, regional economic and social developments were still the main causes of conflict. Furthermore, reciprocal security concerns were a cause of much tension and often broke out into open warfare.

During the period, 1800-1920, Europe expanded across the globe, driven further by improved manufacturing capabilities, primary input requirements, and the need for commodity and capital outlets. By means of diplomatic skill and military capabilities Britain and France emerged as the dominant players and began to seek political domination in foreign parts, in order to pursue their competitive, strategic and economic ends. 'East' and 'West', 'orient' and 'occident' were the legitimising leitmotifs that began to emerge in order to disguise the reality of material forces. In other words, these representations were elements in the historical scenario, not its explanation.

In the third period, 1920-1945, Western powers were involved in State-building activities, supplanting the over-stretched and decadent Ottoman system and interlocking the Middle East in a system of domination and control. New territorial identities were pressed into the mould of state forms. Iran fell natural prey to this widening of the sphere of penetration and influence. In the attempts to achieve political and economic incorporation, domestic states and allies in the region were either cultivated or 'purchased'.

After the Second World War the expansionist Soviet Union began to pursue the traditional expansionist proclivities inherited from Russia. However, it was now fired by a new ideological stance that set itself the task of destroying continued capitalist expansion. This new era in international affairs was itself to collapse, leaving Western capitalism ever more rampant, but its incorporation of the Middle East was still far from conclusive.

In the following section a brief historical development of the Middle East is presented with particular emphasis given to the role of 'Islam'. The importance of 'Islam' needs to be highlighted as it provides the main source of cultural identity for the region affecting its social, political and economic developments, leading to the creation of different political structures as seen in Ottoman, Iran and Mogul. This also provides an explanation and rationale for the historical realism approach adopted by this study. Therefore, the theoretical approach on the causes of conflicts are dealt with in section 4 and the explanations for the asymmetrical relations between Europe and the Middle East are examined in section 5.

1.3 A brief historical development

Islam is a cultural identity, some would say the cultural identity of the Middle East. It is a powerful identity that has acted a significant catalyst in political, social and economic developments in this region. Therefore, a brief historical review of the Middle East in relation to Islam is of crucial importance.

Historically it was the economic surplus provided by settled agriculture that supported Mesopotamian civilisation enabling its attendant class divisions, city states, long distance trade, literacy programmes unified cosmologies to develop and evolve. The absence of basic ecology and material development prevented similar progress in Arabia. Hence the relative prominence of the Mesopotamian region as an area of material development and its attractiveness to external interests.

The Arabian lack of progress and their inability to foster ethnic and cultural homogeneity was almost without parallel in central Asia or Europe.⁹ In the 7th century A.D. Muhammed the prophet appropriated a monotheistic primacy for the Arabs,

⁹ P. Crone, *Slaves on Horses*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1980), p.24.

hitherto claimed in Judaism by the Jews. The prophetic emergence, according to Cook, "effected an explosive fusion of Islamic monotheism and Arab tribal politics".¹⁰

Common assertion has it that it was the ideological cohesion of Islam which enabled it to overcome Empires in the Middle East, North Africa, Spain and France. However, the evidence strongly supports the view that imperial decay, rather than ideological cohesiveness, was the main reason for the success of Islamic expansion.¹¹

However, the Arabs did receive resistance to their expansionist policy in many quarters most spectacularly at the siege of Constantinople (674-8 A.D. and 717-8 A.D.). Finally, by 935 AD only Baghdad remained under central control.¹² The collapse of the Abasid opened the frontiers of inner Asia to the Turkish peoples of inner Asia and by 1444 A.D. feudal Europe had been overrun and defeated by the Ottoman. The Mogul Empire in India was consolidated in 1556-1606 A.D., and the Safavid Empire in Persia was established in 1501 A.D. However, internal feuds and external conflicts hampered these extended political formations and they failed to compete with the increasing dynamic mercantile expansion from Europe.

In the three system of government – Ottoman, Safavid and Gajar, different material production systems existed. In the Ottoman heartland a pure form of tributary society prevailed.¹³ In Safavid Persia Shi'ism became the formal state religion and society was composed of a tributary structure, albeit one with weaker central control, and exhibiting a larger proportion of pastoral nomads leading to a system of tribal organisation combined with effective landlord control.¹⁴

¹⁰ M. Cook, *Muhammed*, (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1983).

¹¹ Hodges, R. and Whitehouse, D., *Charlemagne and the Origins of Europe*, (Duckworth, London, 1983). Also Hourani, A., *A History of the Arab Peoples*, (Faber and Faber, London, 1991).

¹² Paul Kennedy, op. cit., p.62.

¹³ F. Moghadam 'Nomadic Invasion and the Development of Production Forces: An Historical Study of Iran, (1000-1800)', in *Science and Society*, Vol.52, No.4.

¹⁴ I. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1989), p.299.

During the Qajar period, the central authority and landowners' power was reduced, and the "ulema" were able to develop enhanced autonomy through the establishment and control of religious courts, private armies and bodies of students. As a result, the "ulema" in Iran constituted a powerful group able to take possession of system surpluses. This enabled them to establish a much greater degree of independence from the central tributary structures than the Sunni clergy of the Ottoman domains.

Islam then, in these three systems of government, articulated itself in three distinct forms. In this sense, Islam has had no unitary nature, and therefore it cannot be understood as either an enduring, recalcitrant tradition, a cultural form operating to block other social and historical determinations or in terms of the theological power of the Islamic clergy based on an unchanging doctrine. As a form of religious identification and culture signification, 'Islam' remains rooted in broader sets of social and material practice. In other words its changing forms must be related to the historically given organisation of economy and polity.¹⁵

During this period a remarkable growth in the international trading system and the strength of European military strategic power took place. The Middle East was faced with dynamic capitalism from Europe and its vast capacity for reproduction and dispersible surpluses. The tributary empires fell prey to European expansion. Consequently, to survive and to facilitate modernisation these societies had to create capitalist property structures. Separation between the institutions of rule and the mechanising by which the surpluses of labour could be appropriated, became the necessary step towards modernising society and creating the modern sovereign state.

¹⁵ Simon Bromley, *op. cit.*, p.43.

1.4 Theoretical approaches to the causes of conflicts

This thesis applies a theoretical analysis to the causes of the conflicts that have persisted between Ottoman/Iraq and Iran. The analysis is based on Thucydides' famous analysis of Peloponnesian Wars between Athens and Sparta,¹⁶ and Kenneth Waltz's discussion on the causes of war.¹⁷

Thucydides tries to give an account of the causes of conflicts that persisted between Athens and Sparta.¹⁸ He identifies the specific instances – the immediate causes of war – where their interests clashed. "This is in order", he says "that there should be no doubt in anyone's mind about what led to this great war falling upon the Hellenes".¹⁹ But, according to him, "the real reason for the war is, most likely, to be disguised by such argument".²⁰ For him, "what made wars inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and the fear which this caused in Sparta".²¹

Waltz's argument is based on the importance of the nature of man, the nature of the political system and finally the anarchy of the international system, which according to Fred Halliday²² leaves "no countervailing security mechanism in place to prevent the conflicts". At the international level where the condition of anarchy is prevailing, states, as the primary actors, are influenced by particular internal developments. This leads to a situation where they employ their resources of diplomacy and military power to defend or advance their positions whilst facing other states with incompatible identities and conflictual dispositions. Perhaps a world government is the solution to the problem of

¹⁶ Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, Trans: By Rex Warner, (Penguin Books, England, 1959), p.49.

¹⁷ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, The State and War*, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1959), p.238.

¹⁸ Thucydides, op. cit., p.49.

¹⁹ Ibid., p.49.

²⁰ Ibid., p.49.

²¹ Ibid., p.48.

²² Fred Halliday, *Islam, the Myth of Confrontation*, (I.B. Tauris, London, 1996), p.90.

world war, as Waltz argues.²³ For him “each state pursues its own interest, however defined, in ways it judges best”.²⁴

In the same vein Waltz continues, “force is a means of achieving the external ends of states because there exists no consistent, reliable process of reconciling the conflicts of interest that inevitably arise among similar units in a condition of anarchy”.²⁵ Although he considers the third image – the anarchical system of world politics – as the effective context of international relations, he rightly insists, “without the first image – the nature of man – and the second – the nature of political system – there can be no knowledge of the forces that determine policy”.²⁶ He believes that the first – the nature of man - and the second – the nature of the political system - images describe the forces in world politics, but without the third – the anarchy of the international system - it is impossible to assess their importance or predict their results.²⁷

These immediate causes (the first and second images for Waltz) and underlying causes (the third image for Waltz) of conflicts, realised by Thucydides in the Peloponnesian wars, whilst not universally applicable to the history of conflicts provide, in my opinion as a former military commander, a good theoretical framework for explaining most conflicts. The armed forces among the bordering nations, and between the superpowers, which the “Balance of Power”,²⁸ and other strategic doctrines draw upon, are the remedies against immediate confrontations between rivals at the international level. They provide the clear responses to the security dilemma facing all nations who decide to use their ultimate instrument – The Power.

The Thucydides and Waltz discussions of the causes of war, provide a plausible and cogent basis on which to examine the conflicts between Ottoman/Iraq and Iran.

²³ Kenneth N. Waltz, op. cit., p.238.

²⁴ Ibid., p.238.

²⁵ Ibid., p.238.

²⁶ Ibid., p.238.

²⁷ Ibid., p.238.

²⁸ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations, The Struggle for Power and Peace*, (McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, New York, 1985).

A brief review of the causes of conflicts and wars between Iran and Ottoman/Iraq (discussed in Chapter 2) shows us the ready inclination of each side to accuse the other of starting the conflict, as well as their intention of putting survival above domination. A number of differences between the antagonists are heightened and become almost routine rationales for conflict. Religious belief, Sunni and Shi'ite; hostile and punitive behaviour by authorities on both sides towards pilgrims; the changing allegiances of provincial governors in border areas; asylum seekers; and the activities and demands of Kurdish tribes, are all posited as pretexts for confrontation and war. The three images on the causes of war discussed by Waltz are all clearly evident: the first, the nature of man (religious leaders and their followers, governors at the borders, government personnel, heads of state themselves); the second, the authoritarian nature of political system; and the third, the absence of inclusive international constraint.

European capitalist interests, often backed by local official pretensions, which have persisted since the eighteenth century, have further compounded these regional rivalries. These external powers have manipulated the causes, developments and outcomes of the ensuing wars.

The next section sets out to examine the nature of politics in the Middle East. Thereafter, an examination is provided of the traditional European trade practices that lead to the establishment of a system of dominance and influence causing asymmetrical relations to exist between the two regions.

1.5 Explanation of asymmetrical relations

The apparent turbulent and persistent conflicts in the Middle East seem to imply for some social scientists that the politics of the regional powers are somehow different from those existing elsewhere. For these social scientists the prime candidates behind

this assertion are Islam and tribal politics. Max Weber,²⁹ Karl Polanyi,³⁰ John Hall,³¹ Ernest Gellner,³² P. Anderson,³³ and others, are European scholars who have studied the Middle East under the influence of such a dominant cultural perspective. To them Islam and tribalism are the core elements in understanding the region. This perception of Middle East politics, which passes as "Eurocentrism", has been burdened by a conspicuous lack of the features necessary for development. This is to be found in the modern political theory of the Renaissance and its continued development in Europe through the enlightenment. This intellectual bias has itself become a battleground between intellectuals both in Europe and the Middle East. The "oriental despotism", defined as the backward and stagnant nature of the "East" or Orient, is set against the "occident", the rational, dynamic character of the "West". These perceptions reflect the ideological beliefs of a generation of European capitalism that set out to conquer the globe. In contrast, intellectuals like Fred Halliday,³⁴ Roger Owen,³⁵ and Sami Zubaida,³⁶ set out to refute the notion of the existence of difference.

However, if development is rightly defined in terms of economic indicators and cultural (especially scientific) refinement, then orientalism does little to provide the scholar with an adequate understanding of the Middle East. "Around 1700 the levels of economic development of Europe and Asia were similar; Asia with 60% of the world's population produced 70% of the world's industrial goods."³⁷ As Paul Kennedy shows,

²⁹ Anthony Giddens, Introduction, Weber, in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Trans. by Talcott Parsons, (Harper Collins, London, 1967).
³⁰ Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, (Beacon Press, Boston, 1944).
³¹ John Hall, *Power and Liberty*, (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1985), pp.101-110.
³² Ernest Gellner, *Plough, Sword and Book*, (Collins, Hazwill, London, 1988).
³³ P. Anderson, *Lineage of the Absolute State*, (New Left Book, London, 1974).
³⁴ Fred Halliday, 'Middle East International Perspective' in R. Bush, *The World Order*, ed., (Polity Press, Cambridge, 1987), p.212.
³⁵ Roger Owen, *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*, (Routledge, London, 1992).
³⁶ Sami Zubaida, *Islam, the People and the State*, (Routledge, London, 1989).
³⁷ Simon Bromley, op. cit., p.13.

Islam had in fact been culturally and technologically ahead of Europe³⁸ up until the advent of the 16th century.

In this respect, a modified approach has been followed with regard to the Eurocentric treatment of the "Orient" in outlining the historical relationship between Europe and the Middle East.

Orientalism, according to Bromley, is "one specific component of a more general Eurocentrism which became a seemingly ever-produced feature of Western discourse about both itself and the Islamic world. For this reason, the critique of such thinking must go beyond the mere identification and rejection of orientalist depiction of the Islamic world".³⁹

Edward Said believes that "orientalism is more a product of a European culture than knowledge of the Orient, and as such it contrives to produce a new reality adequate to its own ways of knowing".⁴⁰ Said is accused of producing an "inverted orientalism" by antedating the origins of orientalism and replicating the idealist construction of European history. This results in the failure to distinguish the between the ethnic and religious provincialism common to all cultures, and succeeds in departing from a Eurocentric theory of world history and its global political project.⁴¹

Ajaze Ahmad, stressing the power of colonial capitalism, argues that:

"what gave European forms of these prejudices their special force in history with devastating consequences for the actual lives of countless millions and expressed ideologically in full blown Eurocentric racism, was not some trans-historical process of ontological obsession and falsity – some gathering of unique forces in the domain of discourse – but, quite specially, the power of colonial capitalism, which then gave rise to other sorts of power".⁴²

³⁸ Paul Kennedy, op. cit., p.12.

³⁹ Simon Bromley, op. cit., p.10.

⁴⁰ Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (Penguin, Hamondsworth, 1985), p.325.

⁴¹ S. Amin, *Eurocentrism*, (Zed Books, London, 1989), p.75.

⁴² Ajaze Ahmad, in *Theory, Classes, Nations, Literature*, (Verso, London, 1992), p.184.

The historical processes of Eurocentrism and its attendant 'orientalism and occidentalism' affected the processes of capitalism and authoritarianism in most countries of the Middle East. In the first instance, the imperialist world, describing the East as characterised by irrational behaviour, perceived it to deserve authoritarian regimes, which in turn facilitated capitalist intrusion. Furthermore, these authoritarian rulers occupied a paradoxical position that castigated the West on the grounds of exporting objectionable cultural features, whilst at the same time oppressing their own people in the name of resisting this cultural invasion. The Eurocentric interpretation of politics in the Middle East thus legitimises the exploitative conduct of Western leaders and Eastern authoritarianism. It manages to identify the problems of the Middle East, but does little to provide us with the tools with which to build an alternative theory for understanding of the region. To do this requires the establishment of a historical realist framework that sets out to analyse the different periods of historical development in the region and the subsequent changing relationships with Europe.

1.6 The organisation of the thesis

Chapter Two begins with the historical background to the conflicts between Iran and Ottoman/Iraq since 1514, a period marked by long phases of open hostility broken by short-lived intervals of peace. A series of spontaneous clashes and wars, in spite of several treaties, are the defining characteristics of the four hundred years between 1514 and 1914. These were aimed at forestalling the two sides from acts of violence towards each other. The full-scale conflict instigated by Iraq in 1981 against Iran is the most recent manifestation of these historical hostilities. In the course of this chapter the causes of these various hostilities are highlighted, investigated and discussed.

Chapter Three deals with European and Middle Eastern relations in the nineteenth century. These are shown to be mostly power-driven in nature resulting in

detrimental effects on the East. Chapter Four sets out to discuss these relations, which barring occasional exceptions, are seen to operate within the realms and context of influence rather than dominance.

In Chapter Five analyses the socio-economic developments in Iran from the Constitutional Revolution in 1906 to the end of the 1960s. The country's political economy as a rentier state is also reviewed.

Chapter Six deals with the political and socio-economic developments in Iraq after the demise of Ottoman rule up to the late 1960s. The Kurdish issue is also examined as a result of its impact on the foreign and domestic policies of both Iraq and Iran and in relation to Israeli and American policies towards Kurdistan.

Because of its geographical location, the Middle East has always been an important region in the world as it occupies the strategic crossroads of three continents; Asia, Africa and Europe. The strategic importance of the Middle East, which holds 67% of the worlds total oil deposits,⁴³ has been felt in every sector of the Western economy.

The safeguarding of energy resources in the region, by and for the West, assumed prime importance following the Russian Revolution in 1917. This concern was heightened as the discovery and extent of Saudi Arabian oil resources were revealed. Middle Eastern-Gulf oil became one of the most important and controversial political, economic and military issues in international politics.

The Soviet's rivalry with the West created a specific strategic rôle for Israel. In the eyes of the Arab world it assumed the position of a 'client state', for Western countries. According to Peter Sluglett and Marian Farouk-Sluglett, "American policies in the Middle East, in turn, are influenced, if not shaped, by the powerful Jewish lobby in the USA". Although America is concerned with Israel's occupation policies, she has

⁴³ Nicholas Sarkiss, *Oil, the Last and Only Chance of the Middle East*, Trans., in Persian, (Amir Kabir Publisher, Tehran, 1961), p.127.

been its most loyal supporter in the international community, as well as its main financial benefactor. This special relationship has been a hallmark of the political, economic and military history of the Middle East.⁴⁴

Prior to 1962, the balance of power in relations between the Soviet Union and the United States lay with the Americans. However, after this date the balance began to shift in favour of the Soviets as they acquired inter-continental ballistic missiles capable of reaching American soil. As a result, the former started to play a more overtly crucial rôle in international affairs.⁴⁵

Thus, from 1962 onwards, the Soviet Union's rivalry with the USA was to be felt in every part of the globe, particularly in the Middle East. The American reaction to this Soviet ascendancy was manifested in the Baghdad Pact in 1955. Several Middle Eastern countries, as well as the United Kingdom, were made permanent members of the agreement, with the US holding representatives in some of its sub-committees.

The post-Second World War economic boom in the Western capitalist world was slowing down and at the end of the 1960s, the future economic prospects of the West looked strained. In the 1970s recession began to show itself in the overall economic pattern of the developed world. Most of the blame was placed on the dramatic rise of oil prices,⁴⁶ despite the fact that it accounted for only 20% of inflation.⁴⁷

An oil embargo was forced upon the Western countries in 1973 in response to the help that they given to Israel in the war against the Arabs. Consequently the security of oil supplies from the region became an issue of major concern for the West. OPEC played an important and unprecedented rôle in controlling the oil market, resulting in the price of oil quadrupling throughout the world. Strong relations between

⁴⁴ Peter Sluglett and Marian Farouk-Sluglett, *The Middle East, The Arab World and its Neighbours*, ed., (Times Book, London, 1991), p.95.

⁴⁵ Nikita Khrushchev, *Memoirs*, Trans., in Persian, By: K. Dehghan, (Amir Kabir Publisher, Tehran, 1985), p.256.

⁴⁶ Nicholas Sarkiss, op. cit., p.127.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p.146.

Iran and the Western world, especially America, began to be developed through lucrative trade and military equipment contracts⁴⁸. By contrast, Iraq had begun to strengthen its ties with the Soviet Union by signing the 1972 Iraq-Soviet Agreement for mutual assistance. This agreement provided both countries with a sense of mutual security and the resulting increases in oil revenues gave them the confidence to adopt policies that would help to improve the living standards of their citizens.⁴⁹ These developments will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven.

Although both Iran and Iraq spent a high proportion of their oil revenues on modernising their armed forces,⁵⁰ a tacit consensus for mutual understanding had developed between the two countries despite the constant daily clashes along their borders. The ensuing sense of political and economic security had seen the focus of attention shift to internal domestic issue such as the well-being of their citizens. Thus, a common ground for contact was prepared. After the Rabat summit in October 1974, King Hussein of Jordan contrived to arrange a preliminary meeting between the representatives of Iran and Iraq. These contacts were followed-up by meetings between the two sides at ministerial level in Istanbul in January 1975 as well as separate effective discussions held with Presidents Sadat of Egypt and Boumedienne of Algeria.⁵¹ The outcome of these negotiations was the Algiers Accord, concluded by Saddam Hussein and the Shah of Iran. In Chapter Eight, the Treaty is placed under review, and the political developments between the two countries since 1975 are also analysed.

In the concluding chapter the major findings relating to the research objectives of the study are summarised. The gradual political and economic developments over the periods concerned, in relation to the questions posed in this study, are compared, analysed and explained. This discussion is based on a theoretical debate (presented in

⁴⁸ James Bill, *The Eagle and the Lion*, (Yale University Press, New Haven, London, 1988), p.204.

⁴⁹ Peter Sluglett and Marian Farouk Sluglett, op. cit., p.95.

⁵⁰ C. Tilly, *War and State Power*. In Middle East Report, No.171.

⁵¹ Peter Sluglett and Marian Farouk-Sluglett, op. cit., p.170.

Chapter one) emanating from the attitudes of European élites towards the Middle East. In other words a comparison is drawn between the different views on orientalism and occidentalism existing in European intellectual circuits. Through this discussion the basis for a materialist approach to the phenomena concerned is established. By this means the reasons supporting the second question of this study are subsequently revealed.

The extensive scope of this research needs to procure a means by which the historical facts and the different existing political and social theories can be used to support the analytical method used to examine the questions set forward by the research.

The English sources comprise of books on: theories of political and social sciences applicable to the orient; historical writings of the diplomats and politicians dealing with the orient in connection with European policies; the contemporary history of the region; the future prospects for the region; documents in the different British and American institutions, and finally, newspapers and quarterlies of the time.

The theoretical writings used are those that compare the specific political and social developments occurring at the time between the Middle East and Europe. In general there are three different viewpoints used to explain the political and social developments in the Middle East. One group of writers express the view that cultural factors are the main cause of the backwardness of this region as compared with Europe. Islam, with its distinctive character and its heavy essentialist implications, and the tribalistic nature of the region are the prime reasons posited for this lack of progress. Scholars such as Weber, Polanyi, Hall, Gellner and Anderson, amongst others, are the main proponents of this dominant cultural perspective. In contrast, there are writings which emphasise the capitalist character of Europe, and its attendant expansionist policies, as the main contributory to the backwardness of the region. Furthermore they

view orientalism as more a product of European culture than a reflection of knowledge of the Orient. Edward Said and Ajaze Ahmad are the main writers expressing this view.

On the other hand, the third category refers to those whose writers, such as Halliday, Owen, Zubaida, who believe that the nature of politics in the Middle East is the same as everywhere else and attempt to conflate the difference between East and West.

The historical writings in English used in this research are mainly those written by the diplomats engaged with policies concerning their countries - mainly Britain - dealings with the Middle East. These writings attempt to explain the ensuing events at the time and, with the exception of Lord Curzon, mostly represent a moderate view on the capitalist expansionist policies in the region.

There are other English writings on contemporary developments in the region, which the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters of this study heavily draw upon. Writers like Katouzian, Hourani, Issavi, Uriel, Fahmi, Batatu, James Bill, Bromley, Buzan, Slugletts, Amin, are examples of some of the writers who contributed to these chapters.

With regard to the future of the region, the thesis takes on board the recent futurist writings of Fukuyama, Huntington, Popper, as well as the writings of Hegel and Marx, in an attempt to forecast possible trends for the future political and social developments in the Middle East.

The Persian sources of the research contain five hundred years of historical facts pertaining to both empires. These include the writings of Parsadust and Adamiat in chapter two, Mahmood and Adamiat in chapter three, Zowghi and Adamiat in chapter four, Makki, Katouzian, Enayat, Fateh, Maleki and others in chapter five. Finally, the extensive writings of Valadani proved an invaluable source of information in analysing relations between Iran and Iraq since 1975.

A large number of primary sources were also used from a variety of different sources: Public Record Office, India Office Library and Records, unpublished theses, printed material from the Public Record Office, War Cabinet, Parliamentary Papers and India Office; the U.S.A. Papers related to Foreign Relations of the U.S.A. Congressional Records; and the U.N. on the Law of Treaties. In addition the documentary sources of Britain as well as the parliamentary debates of both Britain and the U.S.A. have also been utilised.

The historical approach of the thesis in relation to the pursuit of economic interest, is based on, and therefore indebted to Morgenthau's realist interpretation of politics. The Thucydides analysis of "Peloponesian War" and Kenneth N. Waltz's discussion on the causes of war in "Man, the State and War" form the main part of English language theoretical apparatus used to explain the causes of the conflicts between Iran and the Ottoman/Iraq.

In general, I found almost little or no problem in acquiring the necessary resources required for this research.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF CONFLICTS BETWEEN IRAN AND OTTOMAN

2.1 Introduction

The last five hundred years' history of the Middle East and its relations with the outside world constitute the subject of this chapter. This chapter seeks to clarify the historical developments, and the actions and reactions between the various parties involved, during this period.

In an anarchical world in which each state pursues its own interests, however defined, in ways it judges best, the developments to be discussed centre on the main characteristics and milestones of change that have occurred in the history of this region.¹ These developments form the basis from which the interpretative political theory in this thesis will be drawn. The hostilities demonstrated by all parties involved and the underlying causes of conflict (that have existed since early history)² are given the place of prime importance throughout the research. Without attention to these historical circumstances an explanatory political theory is impossible. The constant use of power, or at least the threat of its employment, are the main methods used, and analysed, in seeking positions of influence and domination. These are the main points of reference for this chapter.

The process of power politics in the region can be divided into four distinct periods. In the first, 1514-1800, the local powers assume the role of the main actors in

¹ Kenneth Waltz, *op. cit.*, p.238.

² Thucydides, *op. cit.*, p.49.

political developments. Therefore, the internal social, political and economic processes of Iran and Ottoman/Iraq and the ways these countries interacted are considered.

During the second period, 1800-1920, foreign powers assume the primary role in effecting dominance and influence over the internal affairs of the Middle East. They do so without changing the internal administrative structures of the countries in the region.

The third period, 1920 to 1945, sees Iraq, initially a British mandate and subsequently a sovereign state, achieve international recognition. The fourth period, 1945 to 2000, covers the period of the cold war culminating in the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990. During this period, the Middle East's development came to play a significant role in international politics.

After 1920, the region was drawn in to the capitalist world. This occurred as the superpowers began to change the administrative structures of the Middle East in their own image so as to be able to manage the local political and economic developments in accordance with their overall self-serving strategies. In the last three periods external elements compounded internal problems as the main causes of conflicts. These elements are described and explained in accordance with the theoretical issues raised in the first chapter.

The countries in the Middle East have been changing continuously since 1920. While these changes have not always been wholly compatible with the interests of the superpowers, the countries of the region have for the most part remained attached to the Western capitalist system.

Arising from the constant shifts and changes in superpower rivalries an increased level of conflictual relations has occurred between countries in the region, with the result that the economic gap between them and Europe has widened considerably.

2.2 The background of the conflicts

A. 1514-1800

This section sets out to examine the internal developments and interactions between the various countries in the Middle East that occurred separately from the influence of external manipulations. During this period more than six treaties were signed, none of which proved to be completely satisfactory to the aspirations of all sides involved. The general pattern of these agreements was one in which the victor or strongest member forced his will upon the weaker or vanquished nations. This gave rise to a situation where the defeated parties were constantly looking for an opportunity to reverse the decisions that had placed them in a position of inferiority vis-à-vis their stronger neighbours. Nationalist aspirations, adventurism, shifting allegiances across political governors' borders, the prejudices and hostility between Shi'ite and Sunni Muslims and the existence of Shi'ite sacred tombs in Mesopotamia, have all been powerful incitements to war.

At the turn of the sixteenth century, the Safavid dynasty was established in the north-west of Iran. Subsequently, Shah Ismael declared Shi'ism as the official state religion of the country. This declaration enraged the rulers of the Ottoman Empire as they had embraced the Sunni sect of Islam. The defining characteristic of the Sunni sect is that its followers believe in the legitimacy and sanctity of the first four caliphs who succeeded the prophet Muhammed. Shah Ismael was a fiercely prejudiced Shi'ite and he declared a curse on the names of the first three Caliphs whenever they were heard!³

³ Manoochehr-e-Parsadust, *Zamineh-e-Tarikhi-e-Ekhtelafat-e-Iran va Iraq*, (Sherkat-e-Sahami-e-Entesharat, Tehran, 1984), p.16.

Despite warnings from the religious leaders, the Shah upheld his decision⁴, and in so doing sowed the seeds of discontent that were to erupt into open conflict little more than a decade later, in 1514. The first battle was fought at a site called Chaldoran in the eastern region of the Empire. The Iranian army was pitifully ill-equipped to meet the Ottoman forces and were promptly defeated before the Ottomans then moved on to occupy Tabriz. However, after little more than a week they withdrew, signing a fragile peace that was to last until the death of Shah Ismael.⁵

In 1520 Sultan Salim of the Ottoman Empire died and was succeeded by his son, Suleiman. For fourteen years he campaigned to extend the Ottoman Empire and it was during this period that the Empire reached its zenith. In 1529 one of the rulers 'ulameh sultan' of the Kalhor region in the west of Iran rebelled, claiming allegiance to the Empire. He occupied Baghdad, but one year later Shah Tahmaseb, Shah Ismael's son, recaptured the city. However, in 1534 Sultan Suleiman led a huge army into Iran, capturing Tabriz and occupying Baghdad. As he returned to Istanbul he ordered Tabriz to be burned. In 1548 he invaded again, this time taking the city of Isfahan in central Iran, before guerrilla activities caused him to withdraw. He then launched a third invasion from the north of Ephrudit, destroying all the cities on his way.⁶ Suspecting that they could not hold their land for long, the two warlords began to discuss conditions for a peace settlement. On 29 May, 1555, the Amasieh Treaty was signed, thus ending the so-called "Twenty years war".⁷ According to this treaty, Azerbaijan, Armanistan and Mesopotamia were assigned to the Empire, while the city of Ghass⁸

⁴ Ibid., p.17.

⁵ Lord Kinross, *The Ottoman Countries: The Rise and Fall of the Turkish Empire*, (William Morrow, New York, 1977), p.108. Lord Eversley, *The Turkish Empire from 1288 to 1914*, (Fisher Union Ltd, London, 1923), pp.109-227.

⁶ Parsadust, op. cit., p.26.

⁷ Amasieh is a city in the eastern part of Anatolia.

⁸ Ghass is a city in the central part of Anatolia.

was declared a neutral zone. Furthermore, the Sultan was obliged to respect and ensure the safety of Shi'ite pilgrims. The Sultan died in 1566, and in that same year the Ambassador of Venice, Vincenito D'Alessandri, approached the Shah proposing a military alliance against the Empire. The Shah rejected the suggestion, and honoured the terms of the 1555 Treaty, until the end of his life.

According to Parsadust, "in the 420 years of intermittent hostilities between Iran and Ottoman/Iraq, since the Amasieh Treaty, eighteen treaties have been signed". The most recent being the Algiers Accord, which was signed on 6 March, 1975. The large number of treaties clearly shows that the agreements reached were never entirely satisfactory to the demands of either side. For the most part, any sign of weakness shown by one side has been seen as an opportunity for invasion by the other. In these circumstances the victor has invariably forced his will upon the defeated leading to a cyclical situation where the vanquished is constantly seeking to overturn an unstable status quo.

Before European influence, especially that of Britain, penetrated the region religion was the most significant cause of deep-rooted differences, suspicion and the call to war. In addition to the differences between the Sunni and Shi'ite sects, and the prejudices of their respective followers, the existence of Shi'ite sacred tombs in Mesopotamia has been a particular bone of contention. The Ottoman authorities in Mesopotamia were commonly neglectful or contemptuous of the Iranian pilgrims. This led to calls among religious leaders and their followers to have these sacred places, Karbella and Najaf, annexed to their homelands.⁹

⁹ Parsadust, *op. cit.*, pp.28-29.

(1) The thirteen years war and the first Istanbul Treaty of December 1589

In 1576 Shah Tahmaseb died and was succeeded by his son, Ismael Mirza. However, Ismael died within a year and power fell to his blind brother. His disability was a serious impediment to effective rule, leaving Iran all the more vulnerable to the military supremacy of the Ottoman. Mostafa Pasha, one of the Ottoman leaders, took full advantage of this situation in June 1578, when he entered and occupied Georgia and Armenia. This marked the start of hostilities that were last for thirteen years, during which time Iran was to lose much of her territories to the Ottoman Empire. The Azerbaijan province and its capital Tabriz were also to fall to Ottoman occupation.

Shah Abbass succeeded Muhammed Mirza in 1587, inheriting a country weakened by internal uprisings and suffering from negligent leadership. Although he was successful in subduing the internal strife, he failed in his efforts to persuade a number of European countries, such as Russia, Germany, Britain and Spain, to form an alliance against the Ottoman Empire.¹⁰ Realising his country's inadequate resources and subservient position in the face of superior Ottoman power, he agreed to the signing of a treaty in December 1589. Despite the fact that the terms of the agreement resulted in the loss of substantial and important territory for Iran, the concession brought a much-needed respite from the thirteen years of war. The effects of the war were further compounded by internal warring factions, which had left the country seriously demoralised and facing economic decline. During the following years of peace Shah Abbass instigated a programme of rearmament so that by 1603 when the Ottoman Empire was suffering the effects of internal feuding, he was in a position to lead his newly-equipped forces out of Isfahan to recapture Tabriz. In less than a year he had won back the lands ceded by the Treaty. The Empire's armies were held off in bids to

¹⁰ A.H. Nava'i, *Iran va Djahan*, Vol.1, (Nashr-e-Homa, Tehran, 1986), p.215.

recapture the territories in 1605 and 1609, and the following year saw the beginning of peace negotiations. In 1613 the second Istanbul Treaty, resulted in the return of all lands to Iran that had been lost under the terms of the previous settlement.

(2) The Sarab Treaty 16 December 1618 and Zohab Treaty 17 May 1639

In 1616 Muhammed Pasha led the Ottoman Empire once more into Iranian territory, besieging the north-western part of the country. However, this invasion failed and the Ottomans were forced to retreat. The respite was to prove temporary as the Ottoman army once again invaded again in 1617. This time they were comprehensively beaten by the Iranian forces and the Sarab Treaty was agreed and signed on 16 December 1618 reaffirming the terms of the Istanbul Treaty. In December 1623 when Shah Abbass was informed of the internal problems besetting the Ottomans and their lack of command and control, he instigated another military campaign that resulted in the capture of Baghdad.

Shah Abbass died in January 1629 and was succeeded by his grandson Safi Mirza. The Ottoman army invaded again in 1635 and 1638 and eventually succeeded in recapturing Baghdad. On 17 May 1639 the Zohab Treaty was signed between the two countries.¹¹ According to this Treaty, the Caucasia region was to remain under Iranian control, Irvan was annexed to Iran, and Baghdad and Mesopotamia were to remain within the Ottoman Empire. The most significant aspect of this Treaty was the fact that the borders between the two countries were clearly identified for the first time and were to become the basis for all future negotiations in border disputes.

¹¹ S.H. Langrigg, *Four Centuries of Modern Iraq*, (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1925) p.69. Lord Kinross, op. cit., p.311. Lord Eversley, op. cit., p.160.

Shah Abbass's successors were not competent leaders. However, because of the efficient system he had established, the country's internal affairs were conducted satisfactorily. At the same time the Empire lacked a powerful leader and so peace reigned between the two powers for more than half a century.

In 1694, the government in Iran was so demoralised and weak that 22,000 Afghan rebels invaded the country and captured its capital Isfahan. The Safavid Dynasty collapsed and Mahmood, the Afghan leader became the ruler of Iran.

Throughout this period Iran was weak and vulnerable. Peter the Great of Russia, having just completed twenty years' of struggle with Sweden in 1721, turned south and by 1723 had captured some parts of Iran.¹² In 1723 the Ottoman army invaded Iran capturing Irvan and Tiflis. Tahmaseb the second turned to Russia for help in attempting to overthrow the rule of Mahmood in Iran. Towards this end he signed the St. Petersburg Treaty with Russia agreeing to cede Baku, Darband, Gilan and Mazandaran provinces to Russia. All these territories then became occupied by Russia except the Gilan and Gorgan regions.

The early eighteenth century marks the beginning of the period of European intervention in the politics of the Middle East.¹³ When Russia occupied the northern part of Iran, the Ottoman armies advanced into western parts of Iran and captured Kermanshah province.

At this time, England and France were concerned about Russian advances to the south and tried to negotiate a peaceful settlement between the warring factions. As a result, on 23 July 1724, Russia and the Ottoman Empire signed a Treaty in Istanbul. According to this Treaty the Ottoman Empire agreed to recognise all Russian rights to

¹² Parsadust, op. cit., p.48.

¹³ Ibid., p.48.

the previously acquired Iranian territory, whilst the Russians for their part acquiesced to the Ottoman seizure of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Kurdistan. Later, the Ottoman army advanced into the north-west of Iran capturing Gazvin, a city close to Tehran.

(3) The 1727 Treaty

When the Safavid Dynasty came to an end, Tahmaseb the Second was in the north of the country in the process of preparing resistance against the Afghans. Ashraf, who had succeeded Mahmood as the new ruler of Iran, tried to establish a peace treaty with the Ottoman agreeing to recognise the Sultan as the Muslim Caliph. However, the Sultan knowing of the desperate situation in Iran, objected to any peace treaty being established between the two countries. Ashraf wanted to be released from the pressure of dealing with the Ottoman in order to concentrate on the internal uprisings which were becoming a constant threat to his rule. The Sultan for his part wanted to conquer all of Iran and annex it to his Empire.

In 1726 the Ottoman army attempted an invasion with a view to capturing the then capital Isfahan. Beginning in the west they entered Hamedan and proceeded towards the central part of Iran. But Ashraf put up a strong resistance and the Ottoman army was defeated. After this failure the Sultan declared his desire for a peaceful settlement. In 1727, a treaty was signed that saw Ashraf recognise the Sultan as the Muslim's Caliph and both sides reaffirm the validity of the Istanbul Treaty signed on 24 June 1724. In addition to territories ceded by that Treaty, Ashraf relinquished Khoozestan, Zanjan, Gazwin, Soltanieh and Tehran provinces to the Ottoman. In return the Sultan confirmed Ashraf's dominion over the rest of Iran.

(4) Nader Shah and the Ottoman Empire

Nader was an ordinary man, from an ordinary family, a brave and strong nationalist warrior, who grew up in the so-called Afshar tribe in north-east Iran. His first attempt to capture the Kalat, a strong castle occupied by adversaries, was successful. His fame spread so that Tahmaseb the second expressed a wish to see him. Soon after he gained Mashhad, the capital of Khorasan. Then he conquered Herat, another important city in the north-east of the country. In 1729, he defeated the remaining Afghan resistance in Khorasan before turning his attention to the central part of Iran to confront Ashraf. On 29 November 1729, Ashraf was defeated and escaped towards the south. Nader pursued him and destroyed the remnants of his force near Shiraz. In 1730, Nader challenged the Ottoman forces in the west, and succeeded in recapturing Hamedan, Kermanshah and Azerbaijan.

While Nader was chasing the Afghans in the south, Tahmaseb the Second's struggle with the Ottoman force in the north-west was beginning to gain popularity. However he was soon defeated and lost the northern parts of the Arras river to the Empire. Having defeated the Ottoman forces in the west Nader decided to disregard the terms of the previously signed agreement between the Empire and Tahmaseb. He then called upon the leaders of his court to decide the future of Tahmaseb. As a result Tahmaseb was dethroned and his nine month old son, Abbass Mirza, became the new king. This in effect placed Nader as the ruler of Iran.

On 21 January 1732 Nader made an agreement whereby Russia would surrender the Gilan province, provided the Ottoman army withdrew from Georgia. He then mounted an attack on the Ottoman army. After two attempts he emerged victorious with the Commander-in-Chief of the Ottoman army being killed and their forces pulling out of Armenia and Georgia.

In 1734, Nader and his large army turned their attention to Mesopotamia and surrounded Mosul. However, he was forced to cut short his plans for Mesopotamia in order to return home to quell internal disturbances in the Farc province. In March 1736, after a consultation with his commanding officers and the heads of various tribes, Abbass Mirza was dethroned marking the end of the 235-year rule of the Safavid Dynasty. Shortly afterwards Nader was crowned as the new King of Iran.

By 1743, Iranian and Ottoman forces were engaged in conflicts that were to continue for some years to come and from which neither side was to gain very much. The futility of the situation was soon realised and peace negotiations were started on September 1746 resulting in the signing of the Kordan Treaty. According to this Treaty boundaries drawn up under the Zohab Treaty of 17 May 1639 were ratified and agreed by both parties as binding.

The Kordan Treaty was designed to remove the causes of mistrust such as religious differences, the issue of pilgrims' protection and trade terms, which had led to conflict. Towards this end the Treaty also agreed to the establishment of an ambassadorial office in each capital. Nevertheless, these same causes would continue to give rise to future wars between the two countries.¹⁴ Iranian pilgrims continued to report instances of insulting behaviour from Ottoman authorities towards them and their spiritual leaders. These leaders in turn appealed to the Iranian authorities to capture Mesopotamia in order to ensure unhindered access to Karbella and Nadjaf.¹⁵

¹⁴ Ibid., p.59.

¹⁵ Ibid., p.59.

B. 1800-1920

(1) The first Erzerum Treaty 8 June 1823

After Nader ascension to the throne, the Zandiyeh Dynasty rose to power. Karim Khan ordered his nephew to capture Basra, an important city on the west side of the Shatt al-Arab river. The city was under Iranian rule up to 1779. After the death of Karim Khan, his nephew ceded Basra to the Ottoman and returned to Shiraz. After the fall of the Zandiyehs, the Qajar Dynasty emerged. Its first ruler Muhammed Khan fought with Russia on two separate occasions and succeeded in regaining all territories that had been lost to the Russians. His nephew Fathalishah, was also to become involved in two bitter and protracted conflicts with Russia. From 1820-23, Iran and the Ottoman were engaged in fighting in the Armenian and Mesopotamian regions. Although the Iranian army could have taken Armenia and advanced towards Baghdad, the two sides decided on a peace settlement, which concluded with the first Erzerum Treaty on 8 June 1823. Once again the main areas of concern centred on difficulties relating to their borders, the protection of pilgrims, and trade relations. As with the Kordan Treaty they sought to facilitate future relations by establishing an embassy in each capital. The historical overview acts as a means of establishing a framework and providing a background in which the causes of conflicts and the means by which asymmetrical relations were established between the Middle East and Europe, can be fully examined. In the remaining chapters (3-7) the political, economic and institutional factors of change are analysed.

(2) The Second Erzerum Treaty 31 May 1847¹⁶

In 1833, Abbass Mirza, the Crown Prince died. At the time of his death his son, Muhammed Mirza, was engaged in attempting to suppress mutinous forces in Herat. On learning of his father's death, he left the besieged Herat for Tehran, with the express purpose of receiving his grandfather's recommendation for ascension to the now vacant throne.¹⁷ During this period Iran became increasingly embroiled in internal strife. The Ottoman forces saw their opportunity and captured Muhammara massacring large numbers of civilians in the process.¹⁸

Britain and Russia, for mutually beneficial reasons, decided to intervene and called for a negotiated end to hostilities. As Adamiyat explains, "the First Erzerum Treaty formed the basis for conflict between Russian, British, Ottoman and Iranian diplomacy. The Russian and British policies towards the Iran-Ottoman differences, and their relations with the Iranian court and Sublime Porte, were mainly influenced by the desire to protect and expand their interests in the East. On the one hand, Sir Stratford Canning, who exercised great influence in the Sublime Porte, supported the Ottomans on certain important issues that had a direct impact on British policies in the area, such as the question of dominance over the Shatt al-Arab waterway. On the other hand, Mr. Butenief, the Russian ambassador in Istanbul, was co-ordinating his policies in such a way that they would not damage the intimate relations that existed between London and St. Petersburg.¹⁹ In 1843 a Commission of representatives of the four countries involved, the Ottoman, Iran, Britain and Russia, was formed in Erzerum. The British and Russian representatives were observers without the right to vote. On 31 May 1847,

¹⁶ See Appendix 1 for full text of the Treaty.

¹⁷ M.S. Ivanove, Trans., in Persian, *Tarikh-e-Iran*, (Entesharat-e-Puyesh, Tehran, 1982), p.331.

¹⁸ Parsadust, op. cit., p.66.

¹⁹ Fereidoon-e-Adamiyat, *Amir Kabir va Iran*, (Entesharat-e-Kharazmi, Tehran, 1983), p.79.

after four years of hard and intensive negotiations, the Second Treaty of Erzerum, which comprised of nine articles, was finally agreed.²⁰

(3) The British and Russian plot against Iran. The Explanatory Note

A careful study of this Treaty reveals its detailed and comprehensive nature. Both parties had been concerned with the details and had taken account of the failure of past treaties. However, on 11 April, 1847, fifty-two days before being signed by the Iranian delegation, Ali Effendi, the Ottoman Foreign Minister, dispatched two communiqués to the British and Russian ambassadors at the Sublime Porte. These were sent in order to assess the respective opinions of both countries with regard to the Muhammara area east of the Shatt al-Arab River, as well as their perceptions of the financial differences between Persia and the Ottoman governments. The said ambassadors, who according to Manoochehr-e-Parsadust, "had conspired with the Ottoman government against Iran",²¹ replied jointly with an explanatory note, in which they said, "the anchorage of Muhammara is the port situated opposite the City of Muhammara in Haffar Canal, and this definition is not susceptible to any other interpretation. The undersigned representatives are further in agreement with the Ottoman Minister in the view that in ceding to Persia the region in question, the city, port and anchorage of Muhammara and the island of Khizr, the Sublime Porte is not ceding any other territory or any other ports there may be in this region."²²

As Adamiyat noted, Ali Effendi had been trying to have his point of view accepted before the documents were exchanged.²³ The text of the Treaty makes clear,

²⁰ Khalid al-Izzi, *The Shatt al-Arab Dispute*, A legal study, (Research and Publishing Ltd, London 1981), p.199.

²¹ Parsadust, op. cit., p.76.

²² Khalid al-Izzi, op. cit., p.204.

²³ Adamiyat, op. cit., p.126.

the sovereignty of Iran over Muhammara and the area on the east part of Shatt al-Arab, which was then occupied by Persian tribes.²⁴ According to Adamiyat, on 13 June 1846, Colonel Williams suggested to Sir Stratford Canning, "It is nonsense to refer to Sulaimaniyah without its vicinity. For the same reason that Muhammara implied for the city itself, the port and harbour, it is advisable and fair to adopt the same interpretation for Sulaimaniyah".²⁵ At this point, "The Ottoman government was insisting upon the Russian and English ambassadors to compel the Iranian envoy to ratify the Explanatory Note before the documents were exchanged. They forced the Iranian Envoy Mirza Muhammed Ali to do so."²⁶

Mirza Muhammed Ali the Iranian Ambassador in Paris, when returning back to Iran through Istanbul, was asked by the Iranian government to exchange the instrument of approval of the Treaty of Erzerum. When he arrived in Istanbul he visited the English and Russian ambassadors. They wanted him to sign, over and above the exchange of instruments of approval, a note containing an interpretation of the Articles of the Treaty which were in favour of the Ottoman government.²⁷

As Khalid al-Izzi says, "the Persian envoy accepted and wrote to the British and Russian Ambassadors on 31 January 1848".²⁸

I hereby declare to Your Excellency that by virtue of the mission with which I am entrusted by my government for "The exchange of Ratification" of the Treaty of Erzerum, I concur entirely with the explanation given to Sublime Porte by the respective representatives of the two mediating powers with the reference to the three first points of your Excellency's communication. I further declare, that I have no objection to the insertion in Article 7 of the passages in regard to reciprocity of the treatment to be observed by the two governments in relation to their respective subjects, pilgrims and consular agents, and further that, in the matter of fortifications, His Majesty the Shah agrees that, as long as Turkey refrains from the constructions on the right bank of the Shatt al-Arab opposite Persian

²⁴ Ibid., p.124.

²⁵ Ibid., p.125.

²⁶ Parsadust, op. cit., p.80.

²⁷ For details of Explanatory Note, see, Khalid al-Izzi, op. cit., p.203.

²⁸ Ibid., p.30.

territories, Persia will for her part refrain from such constructions on the left bank, possession of which is assured to her under the provision of the Treaty. In faith whereof I have signed these presents and sealed them with my seal.²⁹

Muhammed Ali Khan, as an experienced diplomat, knew what the nature of his mission, "To Exchange the Document", was. But he was both weak-willed and morally unscrupulous, having accepted a bribe from the Ottoman government in the form of, "the Sultan's Prize".³⁰ Moshir al-Dowleh, a prominent politician, publicly proclaimed that Muhammed Ali Khan had received 4,000 Toomans as a bribe from the Ottoman Government.³¹

According to national and international law, the action of the Iranian envoy does not have any firm legal basis. This is due to the fact that any act taken by an envoy, which is beyond the scope of his authorised mission does not have legal credibility.³² In addition, international laws concerning treaties do not allow for any interpretation to occur in ratifying them.³³ According to Article 8 of the Vienna Convention, any treaty entered into by the authorised envoy of a country is not valid unless that envoy's government ratifies it. On the other hand, the British and Russian delegations to this Commission, were not granted any voting rights, and were at best, merely observers to the unfolding negotiations. Therefore, the said ambassadors' explanation and analysis did not have any legal validity.

After Mirza Ali Khan's declaration, the Erzerum Treaty Instruments were exchanged at the home of the Ottoman Foreign Minister, in the presence of the British

²⁹ Ibid., p.30.

³⁰ Adamiyat, op. cit., pp.144-145.

³¹ Ibid., p.126. Also see, Ismael Raiin, *Hoghough Beguiran-e-Englis Dar Iran*, (Entesharat-e-Djavidan, Tehran, 1983), pp.69-79.

³² L. Oppenheim, *International Law*, Vol.1, 8th ed., (Longmans, London, 1955), p.797. Also Ian M. Sinclair, *The Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties*, (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1973), p.145.

³³ Ibid., p.820.

and Russian ambassadors, on 20 March 1848. The Iranian government immediately objected and sent letters to the parties involved to the following effect:

When he arrived in Istanbul the Russian and British representatives requested him to sign, over and above the exchange of instruments of approval, a "Note" containing an interpretation of the articles of the treaty which was in favour of the Ottoman government. The government of Iran had not the slightest information on the text of the interpretation and the said Mirza Muhammed Ali Khan, trusting in the influence of the Russian and the British upon the Iranian court of that time, signed it on his own initiative and without any authority to do so.³⁴

This shows that the Iranian government was not complacent about the development which had taken place, but because of the British and Russian influences, was forced to participate in the Commission outlined in Article No.3 of the Treaty which set about determining the frontiers between the two countries.

(4) The Explanatory Note - consequences

The second Erzerum Treaty played a very significant role in relations between Iran and the Ottoman Empire. Its importance lies in the fact that it formed the basis of the final historical development between Iran and Ottoman, as well as laying the foundation for future Iran-Iraq relations. It was the first time that the boundaries between the two countries were precisely demarcated and defined.

Although the present boundaries between Iran and Iraq are still mainly defined by this Treaty, it also paradoxically forms the basis for territorial differences of opinion and disputes between the two countries.

As a result of the Explanatory Note, and in direct violation of the Erzerum Treaty, the Porte withheld the upper eastern part of Shatt al-Arab from Iran. This had

³⁴ League of Nations official journal, Feb. 1955, p.208. Some facts concerning the dispute between Iran and Iraq over Shatt al-Arab, (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tehran, May 1969), p.6.

strong negative effects on the Iranian government and was to sow the seeds of distrust between successive governments in Iran and Iraq.

The occupation of this eastern part of Shatt al-Arab was to assume a position of prime material importance with regard to ensuing conflicts between the two countries. From their position in the Khoram-Shahr³⁵ vicinity, the Ottoman troops would be able to occupy this vital part of Iran without encountering effective resistance from Iranian defence establishments. The military collapse of Khoram-Shahr would facilitate the occupation of Abadan Island, which in turn could aid the establishment of full dominance by the Ottoman over the entire Shatt al-Arab.

In the nineteenth century, trade links between Europe, the Persian Gulf area and the Indian sub-continent, assumed a position of increased significance for the British economy. They viewed the domination of this part of the Middle East as the cornerstone of their international and trading strategy. It was these concerns that dictated the role played by the British authorities in support of the Porte.

(5) The effects of German emergence in the region

The Demarcation Commission continued to work for three years until difficulties and wide differences of opinion led to its stagnation and temporary disbandment. The Crimean War, 1854-56, and the Iran-English conflict over Herat, 1856-57, delayed the reconvening of the Commission for almost twenty-five years.³⁶

According to Parsadust, in 1869 the British and Russian governments forced the Iranian and Ottoman governments to accept frontier lines which were drawn up by the

³⁵ The Iranian name for Muhammara.

³⁶ Parsadust, op. cit., p.84.

Ottoman, and urged them both to cease their hostilities.³⁷ As a result, in 1875 Iran and the Ottoman government agreed to start negotiating again, but the Balkans War of 1876 disrupted the proceedings.

Germany under Bismarck had defeated the French in 1871. The pace of German unification was speeded up and a German Empire proclaimed. Wilhelm II, 1859-1941, dismissed Bismarck in 1890, and continued to expand German influence to the east. This set him on a collision course with the British whose interests were dominant in the region. The weakening of the Ottoman Empire aided the growth of German power in the "March to the East", (Drang nach Osten). Germany won the contracts for both the railroads from Istanbul to Baghdad and Basra as well as control over the shipping rights from Europe to the Persian Gulf. Hence, Germany was becoming a powerful competitor challenging British dominance in the Middle East.³⁸

Germany's increasing power threatened not only British but Russian influence in Iran and the Ottoman Empire. In a bid to counter German encroachment they sought to protect their common interests by signing the famous 1907 Treaty with Iran, Afghanistan and Tibet.³⁹ The discovery of oil in Iran coupled with her own highly efficient shipping industry, induced Britain to radically alter her strategy regarding relations with the country. These factors raised the level of Britain's political status and intervention in the area to new heights as it sought to protect these lucrative economic concerns. At 4.00 a.m. on 5 May 1908, for the first time, oil erupted from one of the wells in the Masched Soleiman region. That day was described by Langhurst as the "most remarkable day" in British history.⁴⁰ But, as Parsadust believed,

³⁷ Ibid., p.85.

³⁸ Helmut Mejeher, *Imperial Quest for Oil*, (Ithaca Press, London, 1976), p.110.

³⁹ Parsadust, op. cit., 87. Appendix 5 for full details of Treaty.

⁴⁰ Henry Langhurst, *Adventure in Oil, The Story of British Petroleum*, (Sedgwick & Jackson Ltd, London, 1925), p.250.

because of the discovery of oil in Iran, which coincided with a constitutional revolution which failed to fulfil the hopes and wishes of the Iranian people, by a cruel irony their fate worsened, and they are experiencing captivity more than ever. Since then oil has enjoyed a special rôle in the hardships and backwardness enforced upon Iran.⁴¹

The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company was formed in April 1909 after the discovery of a commercial volume of oil. In 1911 Winston Churchill became the First Sea Lord at the Admiralty. He wrote, "In 1913 the world was in crisis and England was eager to build ships with greater speed".⁴² In May 1914, the British Government bought up the majority of the Anglo-Iranian Company's shares on behalf of the British government. Keeping the Iranian government in the dark, the UK parliament approved the bill by 245 votes in favour and 18 against.

Ramsey Macdonald, then opposition leader in Parliament opposed the bill and said,

the government claims that the deal between the Anglo-Iranian company and the English government is a trade agreement, but it is not true...the policy of Anglo-Iranian in Iran is colonial and damages Iranian independence.⁴³

(6) The Tehran Protocol 21 December 1911

The meeting of European countries at the end of the nineteenth century to discuss the strategic interests of European powers outside Europe delayed the process of negotiation between Iran and Ottoman.

The discovery of oil in the beginning of the twentieth century, framed against the background of Germany's increased influence in the Ottoman Empire and the Persian Gulf region, as well as the differences that still existed between Iran and the

⁴¹ Parsadust, op. cit., p.95.

⁴² Winston Churchill, *The World Crisis*, (Longmans, London, 1913), p.105.

⁴³ Mostafa Fateh, *Panjah Sal Naft Dar Iran*, (Entesharat-e-Peyam, Tehran, 1979), p.265. *British Parliament*, Vol.63, 1914.

Ottoman Empire, were the issues of tantamount concern affecting policy in the Middle East. Therefore, the two principal imperial powers, Britain and Russia, urged the Iranian and Ottoman governments to start negotiations. The result of these negotiations was the signing of an agreement by the foreign minister of Iran and the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran agreed the so-called "Tehran Protocol of 21 December 1911".⁴⁴

There are essentially four points of prime importance to emerge from this new agreement. These were; the recognition of the second Erzerum Treaty as the basis for all negotiations, in the case of any differences that arise, they should be referred to the International Court of Appeal at the Hague, military occupation does not imply legitimacy of possession, and no intermediary body was to be involved in the resolution of disputes.

The Protocol also agreed to the establishment of a Commission in Istanbul, which-despite any prior agreements included representatives from both Britain and Russia. At the outset the Ottoman representative propounded the Explanatory Note signed by Muhammed Ali Khan, the binding legitimacy of which was refuted by the Iranian delegation. In accordance with the Tehran Protocol the Ottoman representative asked the International Court of Arbitration to intervene in reaching a decision.⁴⁵ During the seventeenth session, the Iranian representative suddenly announced the following,

Although the Iranian government does not in principle agree with the Explanatory Note, as a sign of good faith and a sensible response to the efforts which the mediating parties have made for the last seventy years, the Iranian delegation accepts the Explanatory Note as a part of the Erzerum Treaty.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ See Appendix 2 for full text of Treaty.

⁴⁵ Article IV.

⁴⁶ Iranian Foreign Ministry, *op. cit.*, p.7.

The Iranian government, acting under pressure from the mediating parties, finally agreed to accept the conditions of the Explanatory Note. This was quickly followed on 4 November 1913 by full acceptance of the Protocol and the signing in 1914 of the Minutes of meetings relating to frontier lines.

(7) The Constantinople Protocol of 4 November 1913

The Constantinople Protocol was a hugely important document that was to have a major influential effect on both the later Boundary Treaty of July 1937, and the Algiers Accord of March 1975. This agreement contained a long preamble and 8 Articles.⁴⁷ Prior to its signing, and unbeknownst to the Iranian delegation,⁴⁸ the Russians and the British had been conducting a two year correspondence with the Ottoman government. On 9 August 1912 the Imperial Russian Embassy at Istanbul addressed a note to Sublime Porte stating,⁴⁹

The Imperial government considers that too much emphasis cannot be laid on the necessity of effecting without delay the explicit stipulations of the Treaty of Erzerum, which is tantamount to the restoration of the status quo of 1848.

At the same time, Russia forwarded to the Ottoman government a memorandum showing in detail the frontier line as laid out in the terms of the treaties already in force.

The Ottoman government replied to this communiqué with a note dated 18 March 1913⁵⁰ stating that it agreed with the frontiers proposed by Russia. However, they went on to suggest a number of modifications to the proposals that had been detailed in the memorandum attached to the note from the Imperial Russian Embassy of 9 August 1912.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Kalid al-Izzi, op. cit., p.208.
⁴⁸ Parsadust, op. cit., pp.234-239.
⁴⁹ No. 264.
⁵⁰ No. 30469/47.
⁵¹ No. 264.

On 20 April 1913, the British and Russian Embassies addressed identical notes to Prince Said of Ottoman, accompanied by a memorandum summarising their respective points of view regarding the limitation of Zohab and the regions situated south of that district.

This exchange of notes was followed by a conversation between the British and Russian ambassadors and Shefkhat Pasha of the Ottoman Empire. The outcome of these conversations was then sent to their respective embassies and the Grand Vizir of Sublime Porte on 6 June 1913.

On 29 July 1913, in the absence of the Iranian representative, a declaration was signed in London by representatives of Russia, Britain and the Ottoman Empire, concerning the demarcation of the southern boundary between Persia and Turkey. As a result of subsequent negotiations, the four plenipotentiaries of Britain, Persia, Russia and Turkey agreed on the main subject details and the clarification uncertain matters.

According to this protocol, Iran was to lose a large proportion of its northern territory to Ottoman. In the south, the sovereignty of Ottoman over Shatt al-Arab was confirmed. However, the Muhammara itself, with its anchorage above and below the junction of the River Karun with Shatt al-Arab, remained under the jurisdiction and sovereignty of Iran.⁵²

There are two main points in this protocol which clearly show the influence of the two great powers over Iran and the Ottoman Empire. Article 7 stated the following,

it is understood that the concession granted by the convention of 28 May 1901 by the government of His Imperial Majesty of Persia to William

⁵²

Sir Arnold Wilson, who was the British representative on the 1913 Demarcation Commission, composed of the representatives of Iran and Ottoman Empire as well as the two mediatory powers - Britain and Russia - says in his book, *Iran*, "The attitude adopted by the Iranian and Ottoman governments from the beginning on shipping, and perhaps much earlier, on the Shatt al-Arab was that common sovereignty was exercised in the Shatt al-Arab to the point where both banks of the river became Ottoman territory." *Iran*, (Ernest Benn Ltd, London, 1932), p.210. Also: see maps A, B and C.

Knox D'Arcy...shall remain in full and unrestricted force throughout the territories transferred by Persia to Turkey.

Furthermore, Article III asserted that,

in case of divergence of opinion in the Commission as to the boundary line, it should be reported to the British and Russian Commissioners in forty-eight hours, and their decision shall be recognised as binding on all four governments.

During this period the trading ambitions of the Europeans in the Middle East dictated their support for short term strategies that complied with their long term ambitions to expand their capitalist system in the Indian subcontinent. Deceit, diplomatic and financial intrigue and the use of military power, which often led to open conflict, formed the hub of their policy instruments in dealing with the Middle East, North Africa, and Indian subcontinent. These factors will be examined in more detail in the following two chapters.

The Ottoman Empire, Iran, Afghanistan and India were the victims of these European expansionist policies throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

C. 1920-1945 and 1945-2000

(1) The Boundary Treaty 4 July 1937 between Iraq and Iran:

In August 1920, at Sèvres, the victorious powers in the First World War (1914-19) divided the Ottoman Empire into so-called independent and dependent countries. Iraq as a dependency of Britain was created with three provinces; Basra, Baghdad and Mosul. However, both the British and Turkish governments held rival claims over Mosul province. The case was discussed at the Lausanne Conference of 1922 where the two sides failed to reach a satisfactory agreement. It was decided to refer the dispute to the League of Nations where a decision was reached in 1924 ruling in favour of Britain. The Turkish government refused to recognise this declaration and the matter was then

sent to the International Court of Appeal in search of a final judgment. However, the Court merely served to reinforce Turkish frustration as it ruled to uphold the League of Nations decision at its sitting on 21 November 1925.

During this time Iraq had applied to join the League of Nations. However, Iranian agreement was seen as necessary and concomitant for the acceptance of Iraqi membership. The Iranian government had refused to establish diplomatic relations with Iraq or even recognise it as a sovereign state until it acknowledged Iranian rights over Shatt al-Arab.⁵³ The British government agreed to intervene in the dispute between the two countries, giving Iran their assurance of a fair and equitable settlement. Iran for its part then agreed to recognise Iraq as an independent state, formally doing so in 1929. Following the Iranian olive branch no reciprocal moves were forthcoming from either Iraq or Britain as regards their obligations in the dispute. As a result frontier clashes continued and relations between Iran and Iraq became increasingly strained. On 29 January 1934, Iraq complained to the League of Nations.⁵⁴

The Iranian Foreign Minister, in a letter to the League of Nations on 8 January 1935, gave the grounds for Iran's stance: Firstly, the unlawful signature of Muhammed Ali Khan over and above the Explanatory Note; secondly the recognition of Talweg as a Principle in international law on the river border; thirdly the pressures asserted by Russia and Britain on Iran to accept the Istanbul Protocol in 1913. In light of these factors the League rejected Iraq's complaints. Following the breakdown of discussions in a further session of the League of Nations, 20 May 1935, which attempted to solve the dispute, it was decided to ask both parties to settle their differences in good faith through direct contacts and negotiations.

⁵³ Daftar-e-Motaleat-e-Siasy va-Beinolmelali-e-Vezarat-e-Omoor-e-Kharedjeh. *Asnade-e-Bargozideh*, (Vezarat-e-Omoor-e-Kharedjeh, Tehran, 1990), p.11.

⁵⁴ Asghar-e-Jafari, *Valadani, Barresi-e-Tarikh-e-Ekhtelafat-e-Iran va Iraq: va Maghalat-e-vezarat-e-Omoor-e-Kharedjeh*, First year, No.4, pp.659-60.

On 5 August 1935 Nuri Said of Iraq visited Iran for the start of negotiations insisting on his country's sovereignty over Shatt al-Arab. However, on the day he returned to Baghdad he finally indicated his willingness to recognise Iranian sovereignty over five kilometres of Shatt al-Arab near Abadan. The Iranian government under pressure from Britain to ratify the Saad-Abad Treaty agreed to Nuri Said's proposal. On 4 June 1937 the Boundary Treaty between Iraq and Iran was signed.⁵⁵ On 27 August of the same year, Iraq withdrew her complaint from the League of Nations.⁵⁶ The Saad-Abad Treaty between Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Afghanistan, signed on 8 June 1937, was a triumph for British diplomacy, releasing a lot of the pressure that had been building between herself, Germany and Italy with regard to issues of mutual interest in Europe and Africa.

(2) Iranian enfeeblement

The Tehran instrument was exchanged in Baghdad on 20 June 1938.

In 1941, three years after the signing of the Treaty, European allied forces occupied Iran. The government of Iraq, taking advantage of the situation, decided to ignore its responsibility vis-à-vis Article V of the Treaty.⁵⁷ Given the circumstances, the Iranian government was in no position to force Iraq to comply with her obligations as stated in the article. It was not until June 1948 that the Iranian government, through Iraq's Embassy in Tehran, was able to demand that the Iraqi government take proper action in accordance with Articles 4 and 5 of the Treaty. Even when Iran became a formal member of the Baghdad Pact in 1955 Iraq had still made no attempts to comply

⁵⁵ See Appendix 3 for full text of Treaty.

⁵⁶ Parsadust, op. cit., p.116.

⁵⁷ Ibid., op. cit., p.127.

with its obligations as laid down by these articles.

Manoochehr-e-Eghbal, the then Prime Minister of Iran, took up the matter with Nuri Said at the 1957 Baghdad Pact meeting but to no avail. When Malek Fasal of Iraq visited Iran to discuss the frontier problems it was decided that an independent Swedish arbitrator should be hired in order to adjudicate in the demarcating process. However, the July 1958 revolution in Iraq put an end to these efforts.

(3) The conflicts intensified

As a result of the revolution in Iraq the Iranian government's efforts became confined to correspondence and lobbying.⁵⁸ Towards the end of October 1958, the Iranian Government addressed a letter of ultimatum to the Iraqi Embassy in Tehran. This correspondence urged the Iraqi government to choose its delegation before 6 November 1958 for the purpose of negotiating the age-old problem of frontiers. It went on to state that failure to do so would result in Iran being forced to take appropriate action. Iraq failed to respond to this letter, or to any previous correspondence for that matter, but in the event, Iran declined to resort to aggression.⁵⁹

At a news conference on 28 November 1959, Muhammed Reza Shah of Iran, stated that, "a river between the two countries could not be used unilaterally or under the jurisdiction of either country"⁶⁰.

The Shah's statement was a response to Abd al-Karim Qasim's speech of 2 November 1959, in which he said, "the 1937 Treaty has been an enforced settlement on Iraq and the 5 kilometre sovereignty zone of Iran over Shatt al-Arab near Abadan has

⁵⁸ On 3 October 1958, the Iranian Foreign Minister, Ali Asghar-e-Hekmat, and Iraq's Foreign Minister, met in the sessions of the U.N. General Assembly.

⁵⁹ Iran did not have the trained personnel and necessary equipment to manage the Shatt al-Arab and was consequently not well-placed militarily to assume control of the Shatt al-Arab waterway.

⁶⁰ Foreign Ministry, Facts about Iran and Iraq conflicts, (Iran Foreign Ministry, Tehran, 1982), p.57.

been an endowment, and we will take it back to our motherland".⁶¹ These diplomatic confrontations marked the start of covert military operations between the two countries that would increase in frequency and lead to accusations of open hostility. As a military officer serving on the border between the two countries during this time, this writer bore personal witness to these various operations.

In 1963, Abd al-Karim Qasim was ousted from power in Iraq by the Ba'ath Party and relations between the two countries began to improve. On 19 December 1966 the Iranian Foreign Minister, Abbass Aram visited Baghdad in a vain effort to restart negotiations. On 13 March 1967 the Iraqi President visited Iran. This visit was reciprocated in June 1968 when General Taher Yahya, Prime Minister of Iraq, visited Iran. The cumulative result of these visits was a joint declaration that promised to strive towards better relations with a view to solving the frontier differences and to explore opportunities for economic exchange between the two countries.

However political change occurred in Iraq once again when the Ba'ath Party ousted Abd al-Rahman Arif and General Hassan al-Baker assumed power, in 1968. Iraq's newly-appointed Prime Minister visited Iran and in return, Mr. Abbass Khalatbary, the Iranian deputy Foreign Minister, went to Iraq to begin a new round of negotiations. The Iranian delegation called for a new Treaty to be established based on international law and geographical facts. The Iraqi's for their part called for the cancellation of second session talks in order to consult further and study in detail the proposals on offer. Seven days into the reconvened next session, Iraq's Contracting Party demanded Iranian sovereignty over the five kilometres of Shatt al-Arab, near Abadan to be ceded back to Iraq.⁶² The Iranian deputy Foreign Minister announced in a

⁶¹ Ibid., p.58. Abd al-Karim Qasim was the military leader of Iraq following on the revolution which overthrew the monarchy in July.

⁶² Iranian Foreign Ministry, op. cit., p.78.

communiqué, dated 11 February 1969, that, "in fact, Iraq has neglected the 1937 Treaty for ten years, therefore, in our viewpoint the Treaty is annulled". He then proceeded to leave the discussions and Baghdad the next day.

(4) The official annulment

On 15 April 1969 the Iraqi Foreign Minister summoned the Iranian Ambassador to Baghdad. He claimed sovereignty over Shatt al-Arab and demanded that Iranian ships fly the Iraqi flag as they sailed through her national waters as failure to do so would result in Iranian ships being forbidden entry to Shatt al-Arab.⁶³

On 19 April 1969 the Iranian Government declared the 1937 Treaty null and void. As a consequence of this confrontation the armed forces of both countries were put on alert. On 22 April 1969, the first Iranian ships, the Ebnesina and Ariafar, escorted by the Iranian Navy, sailed through Shatt al-Arab into the Persian Gulf without incident. As a serving officer at the time I flew as a pilot over the left bank of Shatt al-Arab. The Iraqi troops on the other side of the river were camouflaged into the landscape. The government of Iraq took the case to the UN Security Council, but Iran's response was based on her own right of sovereignty over Shatt al-Arab.

Iraq, basing its argument on the grounds of the *pacta sunt servanda*⁶⁴ principle in international law, claimed Iran could not annul the Treaty unilaterally. At the time a conference dealing with the status of international treaties was in session in Vienna⁶⁵ and on 22 May 1969 it decided that the treaties concerning the border could not be annulled unilaterally. According to this conference the unilateral annulment of the 1937

⁶³ Ibid., p.79.

⁶⁴ Vienna Convention Art.26. In the absence of a provision in the Treaty allowing a party unilaterally to withdraw, VC Art.56 would apply.

⁶⁵ United Nations Conference on the Law of Treaties. Second Session, A/CONF.39/11 Add.1.

Treaty by Iran was deemed to be unlawful. Iran, as a participant at the Vienna conference, had no option but to sign up to the declared Convention. This occurred one month after the initial annulment and led Parsadust to claim that the Vienna Convention did not therefore have any legal binding force over Iran's action.⁶⁶ Presumably Parsadust is appealing to the principle of non-retrospective law-making.⁶⁷ There already existed an applicable body of general international law, including rules and practice governing the implementation of treaties⁶⁸ that would suggest that the implication of Iran's action was an inadmissible claim of exemption from, and therefore the ability to violate, existing international law.

Relations between the two countries continued to degenerate before coming to a head in January 1968 when the British government decided to withdraw her forces from east of the Suez Canal at the end of 1971. American public opinion, affected by the ongoing Vietnam War, was vehemently opposed to any further American troop involvement outside the USA. Thus a power vacuum appeared in the region with Iran emerging as the strongest possible candidate to fill it.

The British special envoy, Sir William Luce, was sent to the region to justify the British position and to seek the consent of the Gulf Rulers for the occupation by Iranian troops of the Abu Mussa, Lesser Tomb and Greater Tomb islands in the Gulf lying between Iran and the United Arab Emirates. Agreement was finally reached on 30 November 1971 and Iran occupied the three islands.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Parsadust, *op. cit.*, p.140.

⁶⁷ As this is embodied in Art.4 of the Vienna Convention. The terms of the Article make it clear that it is not void in respect of the 1937 Treaty: "Without prejudice to the application of any rules set forth in the present Convention to which treaties would be subject under international laws independently of the Convention."

⁶⁸ See ed. Ian Brownlie, *Basic Documents in International Law*, (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995, 4th edn.); Brownlie's introductory note to Vienna Convention, p.388; "The Convention is not simply declaratory of general international law, since in part it involves the progressive development of the law. However, particular articles reflect the existing rules or practice." (my emphasis)

⁶⁹ Parsadust, *op. cit.*, p.145.

The Iraqi Government, after engaging in a widespread propaganda campaign, finally decided to terminate diplomatic relations with Iran. The Iranian government responded in kind with the result that between 1972 and 1973 armed clashes, and sometimes real but restricted wars, became common events.

On 12 February 1974 the Iraqi Government voiced a complaint to the UN Security Council claiming that Iranian forces had occupied 5 kilometres of her territory. The armed forces of both sides marched to their respective borders.⁷⁰ The Security Council decided to send an envoy to the region to closely monitor the situation. Mr. Lavis Wekman Monaz, the Mexican representative at the UN, was dispatched to the region. Shortly afterwards, on 7 March 1974, both countries agreed to a cease-fire and to withdraw their forces from the borders. In August 1974 a meeting took place in Istanbul between the two countries' representatives resulting in a stalemate. The meeting coincided with a period of particularly intense Kurdish guerrilla warfare against Iraq, much of which was aided and actively supported by Iran. For the first time since 1973 the foreign ministers of both countries met one another for a series of discussions that took place from 6 to 20 January 1975. These meetings became the foundation of the Algiers Accord that was eventually to be signed by the Shah of Iran and Saddam Hussein of Iraq on 6 March 1975.⁷¹

2.3 Conclusion

As shown by the historical records, the initial contacts between the Europeans and the rulers in the region towards the end of the eighteenth century, were increasingly

⁷⁰ For more information about Iraqi claims against Iran, see the Security Council file, No. S/11216, 12 February 1974. Also S/PV/1762 15 February 1974, and S/11291, 20 May 1974.

⁷¹ Parsadust, op. cit., p.148.

based on trading interests. In order to gain and consolidate a commercial foothold in the area the European powers attempted to establish strong relationships with local powers. The British were to prove to be the most adept and experienced in establishing well-founded relations with the central power of an area in which they sought to advance their interest.

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, as we will see, relations between Europe, especially Britain and Russia, and later the United States, and the Middle East evolved into a system where the position of dominance achieved the highest and most sought after priority. The present chapter has shown western interest intruding in a region of instability fuelled by the demise of the Ottoman empire and the competitive interests of Iraq and Iran around the Gulf and the Shatt al-Arab. The discovery of oil was also to play a major role in the increased geo-political significance of the region.

Due to the changes in the international relations of the region the next chapter is devoted to an analysis of how these relations of dominance developed throughout the nineteenth century. The following chapters concentrate on twentieth century relations, which evolved to take on the appearance of influence rather than dominance.

The reason for this shift in emphasis lies in the expansion of the Western capitalist system and the new social and political developments that occurred in world politics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

CHAPTER III

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

“THE POLITICS OF DOMINATION”

3.1 Introduction

In order to comprehend the different strategies and techniques employed by external powers to dominate and influence the political, military and economic developments in the Middle East, it is necessary to examine the historical processes that existed between the region and the Western powers in the nineteenth century.

The rivalries between the European states in their quest to dominate the Middle Eastern countries form the main concern of this chapter. These rivalries culminated in the unified attempts of the French and Russians to oust the British from their position of dominance in the Indian subcontinent. The German unification under Bismarck added another dimension that intensified these rivalries up until the outbreak of World War One in 1914. The diplomatic skill of making alliances and counter alliances, through deceit, bribery or the use of military force, were all employed by the British as expediency dictated.

Thus, domination over the Middle East, control over the Indian sub-continent, and the future of the terminally declining Ottoman Empire, were the main elements motivating the rivalries and conflicts between the various European powers throughout the 19th century and into the first decades of the 20th century. This chapter is mainly an account of the causes and course of these developments both within and between Europe and the Middle East.

The following sections of the chapter explain the way in which the Middle East was to become involved in the rivalries between the competing European powers. Therefore, the political developments of the 19th century both in Europe and in the Middle East and the various treaties that sought to increase European authority over the region, form the crux of this investigation.

3.2 Iran on the international stage

In May 1800 Napoleon of France invited representatives from Russia, Germany, Sweden, and Denmark to his summer palace "Norfontaine". The result of this gathering was the signing of the anti-British Norfontaine Treaty, which as Mahmood-e-Mahmood explains, formed part of Napoleons overall strategy to inspire or force as many other European countries as possible to ally with him against Britain.¹ Given the fact that France and Britain were engaged in military conflict at the time the treaty held serious and ominous ramifications for the British.

The conquest of India by Nader Shah of Iran in 1739, and Afghanistan on four separate occasions between 1747 and 1759; highlighted not only the strategic importance of both Iran and Afghanistan, but also the increased vulnerability of India. These factors led the British to develop a dual strategy of preservation that centred on the need to maintain a cordial relationship with Iran with a view to eventually controlling her and to gain a position of influence within Afghanistan in order to prevent her from invading India.

Paul I became the new ruler of Russia in 1754 after succeeding his mother, Catherine, to the throne. He entered into a firm relationship with Napoleon eventually agreeing upon a planned military preparation on the bank of the Volga River with a view to conquering India.² Following the agreement, Napoleon sent an envoy to Iran to prepare the ground for the implementation of their plan.

When the British government was informed of the plot against their interests in India, Sir John Malcolm was instructed to go to Iran with two missions; to prevent Iran from collaborating with Russia and France, and to seek Iran's help in preventing Afghanistan from invading India.³

¹ Mahmood-e-Mahmood, *Ravabet-e-Diplomacy-e-Iran va Englis Dar Gharn-e-Nouzdahom*, Vol.1. (Chap-e-Eghbal, Tehran, 1974), p.30.

² Ibid., p.27.

³ Ibid., p.30.

In December 1800, bearing a variety of highly valuable gifts, Malcolm arrived in Tehran, and by January 1801 had successfully completed the signing of a five-article treaty with Iran. According to this treaty Iran agreed to prevent Afghanistan from invading India, whilst Britain for its part agreed that in the event of Iran being invaded by Afghanistan or France she would supply Iran with the necessary armaments and technicians for her defence. Furthermore, if any French troops were to land on Iranian territory both parties agreed to a joint alliance to expel them by force.⁴

Malcolm simultaneously entered into a trade agreement with Iran the terms of which included, protection for British shipping, duty exemptions on a number of British manufactured goods, the guarantee of Iran's debt to English subjects and recognition of the right of British subjects to build, buy and sell properties in Iran.

The underlying strategy and success of Malcolm's dealings lay in the British governments agreement to pay a total of 4 million rupees per year over a period three years into Iranian coffers, and the offer of a series of substantial bribes to the king and his court.⁵ Malcolm later wrote that he encountered no problem which could not be solved with money, going on to add that this would not have bothered him so much if he had have been dealing with a moderate and sensible people, characteristics that seemed to be lacking in the Iranian character.⁶

On 3rd March 1801, Paul I of Russia was assassinated by his guards, and his son Alexander I ascended to the throne. According to some Iranian sources, Paul was killed at the instigation of the Comte de Palham, the then Ambassador to St. Petersburg.⁷

Alexander I immediately set out to improve Russian relations with Britain and consequently turned his back on France. In 1802 Russian forces invaded Iran placing Britain in a difficult position. Whilst wishing to maintain its newly established improved relations with Russia it was also engaged in operating a treaty of mutual assistance with

⁴ Ibid., p.35.

⁵ Ibid., p.45.

⁶ John William Kay, *The History of Afghanistan's Wars*, Vol.7. (Unpublished Letters, London, 1851), p.9.

⁷ Mahmood-e-Mahmood, op. cit., p.46.

Iran. As a result Britain turned a blind eye and failed to mediate in the conflict between the two opposing countries. The outcome of this war, and a number of other hostilities which were to follow, was that Iran lost much of her territories to Russia and was forced to endure the indignities of two humiliating treaties.

As Mahmood-e-Mahmood noted, "by this time, when England had good relations with Russia and her interests in India were not threatened, there was no reason to mediate between Iran and Russia". Mahmood continues, "in fact Iran was a prey which Britain threw to the Russians to satisfy their appetite. Therefore, Iran was of little interest to Britain at the time as the latter's attention shifted towards India."⁸

A brief study of the political machinations occurring in Europe at the time is essential to providing a better understanding of the reasoning and context behind Sir John Malcolm's missions to Iran and the change in Britain's Russian policy.

3.3 Europe at the beginning of the 19th century

The closing years of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th century marked the beginning of Napoleon's European conquests. In May 1800 he crossed the Alps to defeat General Melas, the Austrian army's commander, at Marenga and shortly afterwards the Russian army under General Suwarrow disintegrated in Italy. This defeat hastened Paul I's desire to improve his relations with Napoleon, eventually culminating in the joint decision to invade India through Bokhara with the Russian army and via Eskandarum with the French army.⁹ In 1804, when the Russian-Iranian war was formally declared, King Fathalishah of Iran, disappointed with the attitude and response of the British to proceedings, turned to France for help. Colonel Roimeu, Napoleon's envoy, was dispatched to Tehran with a personal letter from Napoleon¹⁰ that urged Iran to end her treaty relationship with Britain. In return France would provide the necessary military

⁸ Ibid., p.52.

⁹ Arnenue Vambey, *The Coming Struggle for India*, (Cassel & Co., London, 1885), pp.57-8.

¹⁰ John William Kay, op. cit., pp.37-41.

equipment, personnel and financial support to regain any territory that had been lost to Russia.

However, Fathalishah was somewhat ill informed and unsure about the shifting alliances that had been taking place in Europe at the time. He was unaware of the fact that Britain and Russian and recently entered into an agreement to mutually resist any French encroachments or hostilities. Given this state of affairs it seemed very unlikely that Britain would be willing to support or defend Iran in the wake of open conflict with Russia.

The British government, in a letter to Fathalishah noted that the treaty between Iran and England was meant to act as a safeguard against the threat of Napoleon's forces, not those of Russia. The relationship between England and Russia was now on such a firm standing that the former's Foreign Minister, in a letter to the French Foreign Minister, explained that England could do little for peace in Europe without first consulting the Russians.¹¹ Mahmood-e-Mahmood believes that the British government had been so closely monitoring the actions of Napoleon's envoy in Iran that his sudden death in Tehran in 1805 came as little surprise.¹²

Fathalishah had continued to push the British for help in his plight against the Russians. Finally they acquiesced to his demands but only on the precondition that Iran ceded the strategic important port of Bushehr on the Persian Gulf to British control.¹³ This was a game of political bluff that made unreasonable demands on Iran. The British, wishing to preserve their good relations with Russia, knew that Iran would not give up sovereignty over her territories, negotiations would fail and that they would not be forced to take sides in the ensuing Russo-Iranian conflict.

Napoleon, however, had become disappointed and disillusioned with Russia and was anxious to strengthen relations with Iran. Sending envoy after envoy to Iran he finally achieved his much sought after agreement with the signing of the Finkenstein

¹¹ Mahmood-e-Mahmood, op. cit., p.64.

¹² General Guardan, *Mamuriat-e-General Guardan Dar Iran*. Trans., (Gozaresh Publication, Tehran, 1983), pp.21-47.

¹³ Mahmood-e-Mahmood, op. cit., p.66.

Treaty on the 4th May 1807. According to this treaty Napoleon guaranteed the independence of Iran, recognised its sovereignty over Georgia, and agreed to train and equip the Iranian army to European standards. For her part, Iran agreed to terminate relations with Britain and to declare war on her in the event that Britain and Russia were to draw up any treaty against France. Iran was also to help facilitate the transition of the French army destined for India.

General Guardan was sent to Tehran to co-operate with the Iranian government and oversee the implementation of the terms of the treaty. However, before he arrived, war broke out between Russia and France. The Russians were finally defeated at Eylou and the Tilste Treaty, signed on the 9th June 1807, brought hostilities to an end.

The fate and standing of Iran was to be altered as a result of a meeting between Napoleon and Alexander. The two leaders in a bid to achieve peace in Europe had decided to direct their attentions towards a joint effort in improving their relations with the Ottoman Empire and Britain. Henceforth, Iran was to assume a position of less importance in French affairs. General Guardan had finally arrived in Iran on the 15th of December 1807, and although he started the training of some infantry units, cast a number of cannons and built some fortifications, he was to return to Europe after only one year due to this changed political climate.

By this time the new British Ambassador, Sir Harford Jones had also arrived in Iran and all French representatives were forced to leave. Russian mediation between France and Britain failed, but Russia discussions with the Ottoman Empire, through the help of British mediation produced much more positive results.

While Sir Harford Jones was assigned to Iran another diplomat, Mount Stuart Elphinston, concluded a treaty with Shah Shodja in Kabul on the 17th of June 1809. This treaty was directed against both France and Iran and according its terms the Afghan Government agreed to attack the Iranian and French forces on their passage from Afghanistanian territory to India.

At the same time most European powers – especially Britain – were beginning to feel uneasy about the increasing power and domination of France. The Russians became

particularly alarmed when they learnt the full extent of France's aggressive intentions towards Poland. The distrust between the two nations began to grow with Russia starting to build fortifications ready to defend Poland and the Russian Emperor banning the importation of French goods and adding insult to injury by substituting them with British goods.

The British government was busy undermining the French in Spain and Portugal, and other European powers were becoming increasingly eager to rise against the French. Austria, inspired and financed by Britain,¹⁴ declared war against the French on the 9th of April 1809, but was quickly defeated. Vienna was subsequently occupied by Napoleon and on the 14th of October 1809 a treaty concluded the war between the two countries.

In 1811 Europe found itself divided into two opposing camps: France, Germany and Austria formed one front and Britain and Russia formed the other. It seemed that war between these two opposing groups was inevitable and in the spring of 1811 conflict erupted. French troops were almost at the gates of Moscow, when the Russian winter and various logistical problems (regarding amongst others the quality and reliability of French equipment) brought disaster upon the French forces.

While Napoleon was struggling for his life in frozen Russia, Sir Gore Ouseley was in the process of signing a treaty with Iran. According to the treaty Iran agreed to cancel all treaties which she had previously held with other European countries and to prevent French troops from passing through her territory on their way to India. Britain for its part agreed to remain neutral in the advent of war occurring between Iran and Afghanistan and to provide Iran with equipment and the sum of 200,000 tomans per year, to be spent solely on war requirements for as long as hostilities continued, should she be attacked by another European country.

In 1813, all Britain's efforts and resources were channelled into making alliances against Napoleon. One of these undertakings, in an attempt to alleviate the pressure on

¹⁴ Mahmood-e-Mahmood, op. cit., p.162.

Russian opposition to France, was an attempt to arrive at a peace agreement between the former, the Ottomans and Iran.

As noted earlier, since the beginning of the 19th century Iran and the Ottoman Empire were unwillingly drawn into European conflicts. In the first decade of that century, Iran had become increasingly involved in Europe's disputes with Russia, Britain and France all using her as their political battleground. Iran had suffered Russian threats, French ridicule and British intrigue during the course of dealings with the European powers.¹⁵

3.4 European Political Developments

In 1812, Napoleon returned to Paris, defeated and demoralised. He called for a consultative assembly to discuss the future strategy of his country. Talleyrand and Cambacérès were in favour of peace with the other European countries but others, notably the Duc de Feltre, were not. Napoleon himself favoured the latter's view. In the end the Assembly decided to call for continued war against what it perceived to be its European enemies. At short notice three hundred thousand soldiers were made ready, the Queen became the vicereine, and Napoleon himself was made Commander-in-Chief of the French forces.

At this time Germany had allied itself to Russia, with the alliance receiving secret support from Austria. However the union was far from harmonious with certain figures citing the Rhine Alliance, (an agreement directed against Austria that was signed in 1658 by Sweden, Denmark, the Duc de Bavière of Germany, and some of Germany's princes and eminent figures) as the reason for keeping their allegiances with France.

News of the imminent Russian invasion became widespread as the French border troops began to withdraw from their posts. On the 15th of April Napoleon left Paris and by the end of May his forces had pushed back all allied armies to Hamburg and its surrounding areas and extracted a heavy fine upon those who were deemed to have

¹⁵ Ibid., p.167.

betrayed France. The German army at Lutzen and Russian the army at Cautzen, were both in the same month as Europe became horrified by the progress of the war. With Austria's mediation the so-called "Pleeswitz Truce" was established, which only succeeded in lasting until the middle of August. On the 14th of May 1813 the Rsiechenback Treaty was concluded between Russia, England and Germany and this provided a strong foundation for a concerted and structured opposition to Napoleon.

1813 was to prove a year of high expenditure for Britain. Five hundred thousand pounds was paid to Austria as the cost of her agreeing to sign up to the Rsiechenback Treaty. Austria now entered the fray with an army numbering approximately two hundred thousand soldiers. The combined forces, including Sweden and Denmark who had joined the Treaty later, now operating against the French amounted to some six hundred thousand fighting men.

While the truce was in force both sides had decided to convene a conference in Prague in an attempt to settle their disputes. On the 28th of July negotiations started. France refused to countenance any thoughts of retreat to its 1805 borders and discussions ended on the 17th of August without a resolution.

Austria abandoned the secret alliance policy and openly joined the British and Russian camps. On the 27th of August the Austrian forces were comprehensively defeated at Sedan. The 16th of October 1813 marked one of the major turning points in the war when the allied forces confronted Napoleon at Leipzig. He was badly defeated, but managed to escape from the battlefield and withdraw his forces towards the Rhine. His later attempts to reverse his military fortunes were ineffective and he finally returned to Paris. At Waterloo, the political and military life of Napoleon, the man whose genius was acclaimed even by his enemies, was finally brought to an end. Had he triumphed his undoubted genius and competence, would have resulted in a much different destiny for Europe; and perhaps for the Middle East as well.

3.5 1814 Treaty and Britain's new policies towards Iran

As mentioned previously, Sir Harford Jones had agreed an anti-Napoleon treaty with Iran that reduced British anxiety about a possible Iranian-French alliance.

However, Iran had proceeded to organise a sufficient force with a view to attacking the Russians. Britain wished to avoid the outbreak of this conflict at all costs and sent a number of envoys to both the Iranian and Russian camps to prepare the ground for a peace settlement. As a result of these efforts the Golestan Treaty was signed on the 21st of October 1813 which resulted in the loss of substantial Iranian territory to Russia.

According to the terms of a previous treaty Britain had been obliged to train fifty thousand Iranian troops, deliver fifty thousand rifles to Iran and appoint army officers to the front line to train Iranian forces engaged in conflict with Russian forces. However, Britain reneged on all these obligations and forced Iran to sue for peace. During this period three individuals were appeared as the main protagonists influencing British policies towards Iran. Sir Gore Oseley, James Murrier and G. Baillie Fraser's pessimistic views regarding Iran allowed Russia to operate without impunity in Iranian affairs.¹⁶ When Sir Gore Oseley arrived in England, he reported to his government that: "Since there is no threat to India from Napoleon, leave Iran to their savage life."¹⁷

Following the 1812 Treaty with Iran, Britain had begun pursuing a policy of blockading French forces heading towards India. In order to consolidate this change of strategy in the Middle East it signed a new treaty with Iran on the 25th of November 1814. The 1814 Treaty was aimed at preventing Russian and French forces from invading India by facilitating the advance of the former into Iranian territory and engaging these two countries in a strategy designed to weaken the capacity of the latter. Thereafter, Britain's policies towards Iran were of a devious nature and her tactics were based on undermining the internal stability of Iran on the one hand, and instigating disputes between Iran and Afghanistan on the other.¹⁸

¹⁶ Ibid., p.182.

¹⁷ Ibid., p.253.

¹⁸ Ibid., p.236.

On 22nd April 1814, Sir Gore Ouseley left Iran. He was succeeded by a new Ambassador, Mr. Ellis, and his secretary, Mr. Willock, who arrived in Tehran on the 14th August of 1814. Soon afterwards having completed the negotiation of the 1814 Treaty both men returned to London seeking the agreements governmental ratification. At the end of 1815 Mr. Willock, returning to Iran as the new British Ambassador, handed over the signed 1814 Treaty to the Iranian government. However, by this time Britain had secured a commanding influence in the region and the importance of Iran was considerably reduced.¹⁹

In 1821, war between Iran and the Ottoman Empire broke out. Although the Ottoman forces were defeated on two fronts, a truce was agreed and with the Erzerum Treaty of 1823 ended hostilities between the two belligerents. In this same year Russia and Britain had made a secret deal to divide the Ottoman Empire.²⁰

In April 1826 Lord Wellington was sent to St. Petersburg. Shortly after his arrival the war between Iran and Russia, arising from their border disputes, had begun in earnest. Simultaneously the British, French and Russian navies were pounding Ottoman ports, apparently in support of the Greek cause against the Ottomans. According to Richard Lodge, these simultaneous military operations were merely the consequences of previous clandestine deals between Britain and Russia that sought to divide the Ottoman Empire between Britain and France and to separate off parts of northern Iran for Russia.²¹

In the beginning of the 19th century when Napoleon was in power, the general disposition among Europeans had been to construct a 'Holy Alliance' for security in Europe. Between 1815 and 1823 four attempts, all of which failed, were made towards achieving this goal. Finally on the 26th of September 1815 an alliance between Russia, Austria and Prussia was concluded where the signatories agreed to pursue a foreign policy based on Christian beliefs and values.²² To this end, they called on all nations,

¹⁹ C.V. Aitchison, *Collection of Documents and Treaties*, Vol.9.

²⁰ Richard Lodge, *History of Modern Europe*, (John Murray, London, 1887), p.651.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.654.

²² E. Lipson, *Holy Alliance, Europe in 19th Century*, (Adam & Charles Black, London, 1948), p.213.

except the Pope and the Ottoman Emperor, to be part of this alliance. Robert Stewart, the then Foreign Secretary, had been cooperating with other member states in order to assure the success of the treaty, facilitated its signing by the British monarch despite a constitutional constraint. All other European kings complied with the terms of the treaty.

However, despite its general acceptance the Alliance was weakened as differences emerged between the Russian, British and French groups who were supporting Greece, and the Austrians who supported the Ottomans. Robert Stewart was replaced by a new Foreign Minister, Canning, who was vehemently opposed to the Alliance.²³ Canning was to become Prime Minister one year later, and in April 1828, one month after the Torkamanchie Treaty between Iran and Russia, one hundred and fifty thousand Russian troops crossed the Ottoman border. The Austrian foreign minister, Metternich, was opposed to this invasion, while Canning as Prime Minister in England gave it his full support.²⁴ Mahmood-e-Mahmood believes that Britain pursued these policies in order to weaken Iran and the Ottoman Empire by allying itself with Russian interests. At the same time it sought to distract Iran from its concerns the East and to undermine Ottoman sovereignty with a view to hastening her future demise.²⁵ Following their second conflict with Iran the Russians advanced their borders to reach the Arass River before advancing deep into Ottoman territories in 1829. Britain and the other European countries then intervened in the dispute to bring about peace and to curtail any further Russian advancement south.

Meanwhile, Muhammed Ali of Egypt was proclaimed caliph and proceeded to attack and defeat the Ottoman Empire on two separate occasions. The Ottomans turned to the European countries for help, receiving assistance from none except Russia. Britain and France threatened the Russians by promising to help Egypt if Russia continued its support of the Ottoman.²⁶ The Ottoman concession to Muhammed Ali brought the

²³ "The Holy Alliance had been shaken by the conduct of Canning and shattered by the accession of Nicholas". R. Lodge, *ibid.*, p.654.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.656.

²⁵ Mahmood-e-Mahmood, *op. cit.*, p.319.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.310.

conflict to an end. However, a secret treaty was signed between Russia and the Ottoman Empire in 1833 in which the latter agreed to close the Dardanelles to all European countries except Russia.

These developments show the ability of the European powers, most notably Britain, to manipulate the rivalries in the region, and amongst themselves if necessary, in order to protect and strengthen their own interests. In any case, the countries of the region were the victims of these rivalries and compromises.

3.6 Iran becomes more assertive

The Torkamanchie Treaty was concluded on the 10th of February 1829. Iranian forces released from the northern dispute were dispatched to the east and south-east of the country to repel the uprising of local forces. Abbass Mirza, as the commander of these forces, was assigned to bring security to the eastern part of Iran, which was now extended to the Sind River. These developments were not in accordance with the British strategy to protect the western flank of India and they decided to undermine the Iranian initiative. However, it was not until the death of Abbass Mirza in 1833, and of his father in 1834, that Britain could begin to implement measures to rectify the situation. In 1833 Muhammed Mirza, Abbass Mirza's son, had surrounded Harrat, but with the news of his father's death he suddenly ceased his operations and departed to Tehran to secure his grandfather's approval for ascension to the viceregency.²⁷

In 1834, Muhammed Mirza became king and Mirza Abolghasim-e-Ghaimmagham was appointed as the Minister in Charge of Government. These appointments resulted in the reduction of British influence in Iran to the point that Britain proposed an agreement to Russia for a mutual recognition of Iranian sovereignty. Russia agreed to the proposal and in 1834 the official Agreement was signed.²⁸ As Watson writes, Mirza Abolghasim "who

²⁷ John William Kay, op. cit., p.156.

²⁸ Valentine Chirol, *The Middle Eastern Question or Some Political Problems of Indian Defence*, (John Murray, London, 1903), p.437.

was opposed to Britain's influence in Iran",²⁹ was deposed and suffocated in prison accused of corruption.

As a follow up her strategy in defence of India, Britain inspired the Afghan government to expel the permanent Iranian envoy from Ghandehar.³⁰ Muhammed Shah had eventually decided to regain Iranian sovereignty of Herat and on the 22nd of November 1837 he besieged the city. Herat remained besieged for ten months, during which time Mr. McNeil, the British Ambassador to Iran, visited the Shah at his camp, whilst also maintaining contacts with those defending the city.³¹ When the Ambassador failed to persuade Muhammed Shah to withdraw his forces from Herat, he officially informed him on the 13th of April 1838 that the campaign against Herat was contrary to the 1814 Treaty between Iran and Britain.

The Ambassador left the camp for Tehran on the 7th of June and whilst on route he received a message from London, declaring war against Iran if Muhammed Shah did not withdraw his forces from Herat. On the 19th of June, British forces occupied the Khark Island and Iran was forced to withdraw her forces from Herat. The decision taken by Muhammed Shah to re-establish Iranian sovereignty over Herat had been the result of thirty years' experience of Russian and British rivalry in Iran. Having emerged relatively unscathed from its second defeat in conflict with Russia, the Iranian government had felt strong enough to pursue its Herat policy, but proved totally unable to deal with the consequences and larger ramifications of its decision.

The British succeeded in successfully establishing an independent government in Afghanistan. They appointed a king, Kamran Shah, and a deputy Governor, Yar Muhammed Khan, in Herat. The latter, because of his allegiance to Islam, had more sympathy towards Iran than to Britain.³² Mahmood-e-Mahmood cites the allegiance to Islam as one of the major problems affecting Britain's influence in the region. Therefore,

²⁹ Robert Watson, *The History of Qajar*, (London, 1866), pp.280-288.

³⁰ John William Kay, op. cit., p.189.

³¹ Ibid., p.253.

³² Ibid., pp.475-81.

the English authorities tried to choose their agents from among the religious leaders³³ so as to better influence social and political developments. This has been a major strategy in British policy implementation in the Middle East.

3.7 The Paris Treaty in 1857

Muhammed Shah died in 1848 to be succeeded by his son, Nasser Mirza. Amir Kabir as the new Sadr-e-Azam (Chancellor) assumed the responsibility of running the country. He established an accountable system of government and balanced the state's expenditure with its revenues. He introduced a sound education system for the country and started to rebuild the armed forces on a level comparable with European countries. In foreign relations Iran entered an era of independence as a sovereign state. However, powerful interest groups were opposed to these new policies and began to undermine Amir Kabeer's authority and he was eventually dismissed and exiled to Kashan, a city located 150 kilometres south of Tehran.

Mirza Agha Khan, the new Sadr-e-Azam, accepted his new post and responsibilities based on two conditions, the immediate execution of Amir Kabir, and guarantees for his own safety should he be dismissed. According to Ismael Raiin, Mirza Agha Khan was a well-known British agent.³⁴

During this period, Russia had assumed the position of dominance in the region and Britain had to cope with the former's designs to advance south. With this in mind the two powers agreed to the signing of an agreement replacing the earlier secret treaty established between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. For its part, Britain forced Muhammed Ali to withdraw all Egyptian forces from occupied territories, and gave assurances to Russia of Britain's consent for future Russian occupations of Istanbul and the Dardanelles should the situation arise.

³³ Mahmood-e-Mahmood, *op. cit.*, p.457.

³⁴ Ismael Raiin, *op. cit.*, pp.248-80.

In March 1853 Russia, disappointed by unfulfilled British promises, sent an envoy to the Ottoman Empire with a set of new proposals. These, however, proved unacceptable, Russian troops then crossed the Ottoman frontier and in October the Ottoman declared war with Russia. Britain and France joined forces with the Ottoman Empire and the Russians were eventually defeated in 1856. Sir Henry Rawlinson noted that this war was an Asian war concerning Russia and Britain in which France had no real interests.³⁵ This is to ignore the fact that France was anticipating the demise of the Ottoman Empire and had participated in the war with a view to obtaining a share of the future territorial and political break-up.

In 1853 the Shah of Iran entered into a secret treaty with Russia, behind Mirza Agha Khan's back, in order to oppose the hostilities being directed against the Russians by the Ottoman Empire, Britain and France. However, when the treaty became public, the Agha Khan's resistance to it and the Ottoman Empire's strong opposition forced the Shah to relinquish its terms.

Agha Khan argued that Iran could have regained her territory from Russia, if she had been with Britain and her more powerful allies.³⁶ Britain's negative attitude towards Iran following the end of the war disappointed Mirza Agha Khan and relations between the two countries cooled.

The British meanwhile had claimed victory in the Crimean war and were furious with Iran's infidelity so much so that they incited the Afghan government to occupy the Ghandehar. Furthermore, by pulling down the Iranian flag and hoisting the Union Jack in Herat Britain dismissed the passive sovereignty of Iran over this strategically important city.

The Iranian government, dispirited by the British actions, succeeded in recapturing Herat and began moves to regain Ghandehar. Britain immediately declared war against Iran, captured Khark Island and Boushehr, expanded her forces into the

³⁵ Sir Henry Rawlinson, *England and Russia in the East*, (A Series of Papers, London, 1875), p.188.

³⁶ Mahmood-e-Mahmood, op. cit., Vol.2, p.665.

Muhammara region, and began preparing forces for the occupation of Bandar-e-Abbass on the Persian Gulf. On the 26th of January 1857, Sir John Lawrence met the Afghan government and concluded a treaty with this country against Iran.

Mirza Agha Khan, disappointed with the situation and worried about the course of events, sent an envoy to mediate between Iran and Britain. The Paris Treaty was signed on the 4th of March 1857, with both countries agreeing to withdraw their forces from the occupied territories. This treaty also banned the slave trade in the Persian Gulf.³⁷

The new British Ambassador, Sir Henry Rawlinson, arrived in Tehran in 1859. He was warmly received and tried to improve relations between the two countries. Rawlinson believed that Britain would have been better off if she had supported Iran's bid for Afghanistan to be brought under her sovereignty as a strong Iran would prove much better equipped to resist Russian expansion to the south.³⁸ This had been the argument previously put forward by an eminent Iranian politician to Lord Curzon.

London did not accept this policy and Rawlinson was soon replaced by a Mr. Allison and Mr. Edward Eastwick. Afghan forces once again occupied Herat and the eastern part of Iran became highly unstable and almost ungovernable. This situation was further compounded by the death of the Afghan ruler, Dust Muhammed Khan, which cast the country into eighteen years of turmoil. It was not until Abd al-Rahman Khan rose to power with British help that some semblance of relative order was returned to the country. However, following his death the country once more reverted to its traditional internal conflicts. Conflict too emerged in India with the brutal suppression of the revolution that occurred on the 30th of May 1857. Despite its failure this uprising was to form the initial spark that was to result in the country's total independence some one hundred years later.

³⁷

Ibid., p.694.

³⁸

Sir Henry Rawlinson, op. cit., p.43.

3.8 Implicit agreement between Russia and Britain

Mirza Agha Khan was dismissed in 1871, and Mirza Hussein Khan became the new Chancellor of Iran. He adopted a moderate policy towards Russia and fostered harmonious relations with Britain based on shared mutual interests. In 1872, he granted an important concession to Mr. Ruiter, an English subject.³⁹

In 1873 a treaty was signed between Russia and Britain whereby Russian troops were allowed to advance south to the Seyhun River, North of Afghanistan. The country itself was to remain under British influence.⁴⁰

The new Chancellor and the King were visiting Europe around this time, when rumours began to appear regarding the secret Russian-British deal concerning Iran's sovereignty. Mirza Hussein Khan, the Chancellor, sought the truth from British officials but the answer he received was non-committal and far from satisfactory. The Shah and his Chancellor returned to Iran and subsequently refused the granting of Ruiter's concession.

3.9 Berlin Conference

According to some scholars, the end of the 19th century began to show signs of the possibility for a future revolution in Russian society.⁴¹ These insights provided some comfort to the British government, which was uncertain about India's future security.

Under such circumstances Britain recognised the need to develop a long-term strategic policy as the Crimean War and Paris Treaty were temporary measures to larger problems. Nevertheless, later events such as the Indian revolution, the misunderstanding with France, German expansion and friendship with Russia, inspired Britain to resort to her previous strategy in central Asia.

³⁹ For details of the concession, see Mostafa Fateh, op. cit., pp.250-54.

⁴⁰ Mahmood-e-Mahmood, op. cit., p.1008.

⁴¹ Henry Rawlinson, op. cit., M. Wallace, *Russia, 1878*; R.P. Colibald, *Innermost Asia*, 1900.

Bismarck, as Prussia's Ambassador in Russia, had been instrumental in improving the two countries' cordial relations. With Prussian consent Russia crushed the Polish revolution in 1863 and in return Russia helped Germany in its conflicts with both Denmark Austria in 1864. The countries also maintained their allegiance to one another during the German-French conflict of 1870.

In light of these developments Russia abrogated the 1870 Paris Treaty and occupied the Black Sea. Britain and France could do nothing except denounce the move.

According to Mahmood-e-Mahmood, Bismarck's bias in favour of Russia soon became clear to the British authorities.⁴² Consequently, Britain had to tailor her own policies over central Asia bearing in mind Russian policy in that region. The 1872 alliance between Germany, France and Russia was to prove a serious blow to Britain. Russia now became unstoppable, and in spite of the neutrality of Afghanistan, assigned General Esolitove as Ambassador to Kabul. The Government in Kabul, at odds over the increased advancement of Russian troops towards the Afghanistan border, began to veer away from British policies towards the Russian sphere of influence.

In January 1876 the British and Austrian governments, on behalf of all European countries, sent a memorandum to the Ottoman Empire recommending the establishment of an international conference on the security of the faith of Christians living in the Ottoman territories. The conference was held in December 1876, but ended in failure.

The Serbs and other minorities declared war against the Ottoman Empire. The Hungarians within Austria the empire supported the Ottomans, while the Slavs stood by the Serbs. Russian forces advanced on Istanbul resulting in the San Stefano Treaty, which was not acceptable to Britain, being forced upon the Ottoman Empire. Bismarck intervened and the Berlin Conference of 1878 settled all the outstanding differences and saw the Russian Ambassador in Afghanistan returned to Russia.

⁴² Earls Frederick Sleight, Roberts, *Forty-one years in India*, (R. Bentley & Son, London, 1897), p.110.

At this time, the policies of the British Foreign Secretary Lord Salisbury were modestly in favour of Russia, and centred on maintaining friendship with Austria, helping the Ottoman Empire to keep Istanbul free from Russian interference, and keeping Kabul under control. To apply these divergent policies he had a secret, separate and mutually exclusive agreement with each party involved.⁴³ Charles Marvin, in a newspaper, *The Club*, disclosed to an unbelieving world the nature of the secret agreement between Britain and the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁴

3.10 The aftermath of the Berlin Treaty

The Berlin Conference solved the differences between Britain and Russia for the time being but the pace of change was fast and significant changes were beginning to take place in many countries. Abdol Rahman Khan rose to power in Afghanistan which at this time was being occupied by British forces. In Iran, power too was changing hands as Mirza Hussein Khan was replaced by Attaback. Russian officers established the famous Cossack division, which was to leave its own unique mark on Russian history. Britain, in contrast with Russia, set about its own military restructuring by creating self-styled military units for Iran.

It seems that Britain during this period had been employing the use of a combined conciliatory force in conjunction with a series of secret deals with Russia in order to implement her policies in Iran. As a result, Iran lost large tracts of territory in the north, north-west and south-east of the country, to Russia, Afghanistan and India respectively.⁴⁵

In May 1880, Gladstone became the British Prime Minister and immediately began implementing a policy of pursuing friendship with Russia and applying pressure on

⁴³ Plan to unify France, Russia and England was suggested initially by Gambetta. He wanted to take revenge on Germany in response to the French defeat of 1871. See, Paul Deshanel, *The Life of Gambetta*, (London, 1920), p.286.

⁴⁴ Charles Marvin was a well-known scholar, who had written many books about India, including: *Russia's Advance Towards India*, 1882; *Russia at Murve and Harrat*, 1885; *Reconnoitring Central Asia*, 1881; *Railway Race to Harrat*, 1885.

⁴⁵ Mahmood-e-Mahmood, op. cit., vol.3, p.1179.

the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁶ In May 1881, in a speech to Parliament he said that, Britain had no longer any interest in Afghanistan and would begin to withdraw its troops from the area.⁴⁷ Two months later he called upon European governments to force the Ottoman Empire to transfer the sovereignty of those ports deemed essential to the interests of Serbia and Greece. France, Germany and Austria were opposed to this move, but with Russian and Italian support, Dulciyno, a port under Albanian sovereignty, was handed over to Serbia.

Britain, whilst maintaining friendship with Russia, was also seeking to expand her interests in Africa. The Russians sought to exploit this state of affairs and in 1884 proceeded to occupy the Murve, which was under the sovereignty of Iran. However, Britain became suspicious of the unpredictable Russian advancement towards Afghanistan's border and began to consider a deal with Germany. The subsequent deal recommended to Bismarck by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Randolph Churchill, one of the terms of which included a commission for Germany to build a railway for Iran, was eventually rejected by the Germans.⁴⁸

In 1887 Bismarck renewed the German treaty with Britain for three more years. He helped France to secure her interests in North Africa on two separate occasions in 1879 and 1884 in a bid to repair Franco-German relations in the aftermath of the war of 1871, although the French for their part were to remain suspicious of the full extent of German intentions.⁴⁹

The British engagements with Russia in Asia and with France in Africa had helped to strengthen Franco-Russian relations. The rivalry between Britain and Russia continued up until the end of the century, and when Germany refused to fight against the latter in Europe, Japan was prompted into beginning hostilities with the Russians in the Far-East.

⁴⁶ Lord Morley, *The Life of Gladstone*, vol.2, (Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1906), p.248.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p.249. Also: Goldsworthy Lowes, Dickinson, *The International Anarchy*, (George Allen & Unwin, London, 1926), p.57.

⁴⁸ Dickinson, op. cit., p.37.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p.50.

In North Africa British forces defeated Egyptian forces bringing an end to the country's newly established nationalist government and constitution.⁵⁰

3.11 Africa, Middle East and Asia in the 1890s

Relations between European colonial powers and Asian and African countries in the 19th century, were primarily based on the need of the former to preserve and maintain its economic interests throughout these continents. Britain as the leading colonial power was well aware of French and Russian designs on India and based its strategic policies on the defence at all costs of this colonial jewel in the crown.

As a result of these policies adopted by Britain, the three countries that were geographically located in the sphere of Indian influence - the Ottoman Empire, Iran and Afghanistan - were to become the focal point of resultant rivalries and conflicts. France was the only power to gain little from this ruthless competition but the real loser was Iran who forfeited much of her territories. The Ottoman Empire during that century was the fattened calf, as it were, grazing in preparation for the 20th century's slaughter house of European rivalries.

The struggle for new colonies and energy resources saw the European powers switch their attention towards North Africa in a process that was to continue until the middle of the 20th century. In the Middle East Afghanistan had been kept as a buffer between Iran and India and Russian encroachments to the Indian Ocean. Iran for its part played a similar role in acting as an obstacle to Russian designs for access to the Persian Gulf and the huge energy resources in the south. The division of the Ottoman Empire had been conducted in a way to preclude Russia from the Ottoman feast, and the newly independent, secularist and nationalistic Turkey became a further barrier to Russia's advancement towards the south.

⁵⁰ Theodore Rothstein, *Egypt's Ruin*, (A.C. Fifield, London, 1910), p.6.

During the 19th century the Middle East had also become an important producer of raw materials and a market for European manufactured goods,⁵¹ so much so that by 1914 Europe had an almost virtual monopoly over all Middle Eastern economic affairs.⁵²

3.12 Conclusion

In this chapter we have demonstrated the intensity of rivalries between the European powers for domination in North Africa, the Middle East, and the Indian sub-continent. The countries in these regions tried to resist the European intrusion into their internal affairs. However, faced with the military might, the technological supremacy and the diplomatic skills of the European countries, this resistance failed.

The European rivalries, especially between Britain and the newly powerful Germany, led to a series of alliances and counter alliances in Europe that would ultimately culminate in starting the First World War.

The political, social and economic developments in Europe, which linked Europe to Africa, the Middle East and India, were the hallmarks of the last century. They were also to constitute the background for the capitalist-socialist conflict that was to be the defining feature of 20th century international politics. The demise of the Ottoman Empire was central to the geo-political reconstruction of the Middle East in which new countries with new identities were to emerge under European influences. In the process Iran lost vast areas of territory to Russia in the north, to the British in the east, and to Turkey and Iraq in the west.

In spite of these developments in the region, the European powers were far from satisfied with the decisions taken at the Paris Conference marking the end of the First World War and the beginning of a new world order. Thereafter the seeds of new conflicts and rivalries were sown between them leading inevitably to a Second World War.

⁵¹ Roger Owen, *The Middle East in World Economy, 1800-1914*, (Methuen, London, 1981), p.29.

⁵² Charles Issawi, *An Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa*, (Methuen, London, 1982), p.9.

These two wars were a most horrifying and destructive experience for the capitalist world. The Soviet Union's embroilment in the conflict was to prove even more devastating and threatening to the capitalist world hegemony. The threat of atomic war and the potential scale of its destructive force, led the powerful countries to adopt a more rational approach in their international relations by seeking to eliminate the element of risk in their decision-making policies. It is for this reason that since the 1950s, in spite of the polarisation of world politics into Eastern and Western blocs, and despite numerous dangerous confrontations, the world has experienced a period of relative stability and peace. The capacity of each bloc to inflict massive, absolute and total destruction on the other has forced each power to enter into a spirit of compromise.

The Middle East with its vast energy resources, vital to the Western capitalist economy, has played a significant role in international affairs throughout the 20th century. The geo-political significance and economic resources of the Middle East laid the ground for the course of future political, economic and social changes in international relations. The great powers, especially those in the West and most notably the United States of America, have been the main actors in defining the internal and external strategical pattern of political and economic relations in the region.

The next chapter will deal with the international controversies, which emanated from the Middle East, especially with regard to Iran-Iraqi relations.

CHAPTER IV

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: “THE POLITICS OF INFLUENCE”

4.1 Introduction

In the last chapter we saw how the initial trading ambitions of the Europeans developed into established economic and political influences in the Middle East. British political and diplomatic skills combined with military might pushed the Portuguese and Spanish out of the region and established Britain as a dominant force. The Russians with their large powerful army continued to be the main rival to British domination in the region.

The emergence of a newly powerful Germany posed a challenge to the hegemony of the other European powers. The First World War, the demise of the Ottoman Empire and the emergence of the Soviet Union prepared the ground for a new geo-political reconstruction of the Middle East under the influence of Europe.

The vast energy resources in the Middle East have played a significant role in its relations with the outside world. However, the twentieth century political, economic and military developments, in the Middle East can be seen as a continuation of nineteenth century developments, albeit with slightly different aims and changed actors.

The period after the turn of the nineteenth century can be summarised as follows:

a) Russian expansionist policies to the South that extended to the northern part of Afghanistan, the Atrak River in the north-east and the Arass River to the north-west of Iran, and the Bosphorous Strait to the north of the Ottoman Empire. b) Germany's victory over France in 1871 that established her as a powerful state which, coupled with the prudent policies of Bismarck, sought to extend its influence and interests in the Middle

East. Furthermore, the hastily devised policies of Wilhelm the Second, most notably the rapid expansion of German naval power and her increased interference in the activities of the Persian Gulf, caused increasing tension and antagonism amongst the European powers and led ultimately to the two great wars of the 20th century. c) The French bitterness over their meagre share of the spoils of the bloody conflicts and the desire to avenge the humiliating defeat at the hands of Germany in 1871, drove them to seek alliances with Russia and Britain. d) The British desire to protect her interests in India at all cost from foreign encroachments. Towards this end they resisted the emergence of any superpower in Europe, and prepared the ground for the fragmentation of the Ottoman Empire.

The chief victim of these conflicts was Iran but they were also the main reasons behind the demise of the Ottoman Empire, in 1920.

These notable geopolitical changes in the Middle East formed the salient manifestation of rivalries between the European powers in their domination over the Iranian and Ottoman lands. This was done in order to integrate the region into the capitalist system for the benefit and gain of the European countries.

4.2 The transformation period from the nineteenth to the twentieth century

The twentieth century began as the nineteenth had with rivalries between the European powers from the previous century being carried over in a series of shifting alliances and counter-alliances. These rivalries and their resulting alliances set the pace for all future significant political developments in Europe and the rest of the world.

The First World War, the emergence of the Communist régime in Russia and the discovery of vast amounts of energy resources in the Middle East were the main factors

dominating international politics during this period. These events also heralded the arrival of the United States as a major player in international and world affairs

This chapter explains how, in the late nineteenth century, the competing powers of Europe found themselves caught in dangerous rivalries over the Middle East. It also sets out to examine how these rivalries developed into opposing military alliances that were eventually to end in the trenches of the First World War.

The main focus of this chapter is to consider the political developments in Europe in relation to the Middle East, and the way in which the European powers, especially Britain and Russia, sought to intervene and dictate the internal political, social and economic developments of the region.

The moderate policies of Lord Salisbury, adopted at the Istanbul [1876] and Berlin [1878] conferences, were designed to benefit Britain¹ at the expense of Russia by denying the latter any spoils of the 1877 victory over the Ottoman, and halting the advancement of Russian forces into Afghanistan. These policies were eventually to be responsible sowing the seeds of hostility between Germany and Russia.

Indeed, Sir Douglas Dawson stated that the British government was becoming very concerned about Germany's increasing power following her victories over Austria, Denmark and France between 1867 and 1870. In a bid to redress the growing power imbalance he began efforts to exploit the age-old hostilities between Russia and France.² However, these attempts were to prove futile when at both the 1878 and 1882 conferences in Berlin, Bismarck supported Britain against France in the Egyptian dispute.

The rapid growth of German trade and power was viewed as a threat to British industry and their overall strategic policies. However Bismarck's strategy was more

¹ Mahmood-e-Mahmood, op. cit., 7th vol., p.324.

² Brigadier General Sir Douglas Dawson, *A Soldier Diplomat*, (John Murray, London, 1927), p.107.

concerned with reinforcing French hostility towards Russia than antagonising the British. This, he perceived, would be consistent with Britain's designs and moderate her hostility towards Germany.

4.3 Rivalries emerged

France, Russia and Britain were envious of Germany's progress over the 27 year period from 1885 to 1912. The hasty willingness of Wilhelm II to increase naval power and to expand Germany's economic and political influence beyond her boundaries threatened all of the other European powers.

In 1882 Britain had offered a deal to Germany in an effort to maintain cordial relations.³ The deal agreed for the two powers to share those parts of the Middle East, such as Iran, which were susceptible to British influence.⁴ During the German Emperor's visit in 1899 the British government suggested an alliance between the two countries that was firmly rejected by the Kaiser. Some years earlier Britain, concerned about Russian expansion in the North of Afghanistan and Iran, had endeavoured to negotiate an agreement on the division of Iran between the two parties concerned. In 1888, Sir Harry Droumandaulf, carried a personal letter to the Czar from the then Crown Prince of Britain Edward in order to discuss the proposal, which resulted in a tentative agreement being reached.⁵ However, future events in Asia and in Europe, notably the Anglo-French differences over South-East Asia along with Russia's occupation of Port Arthur, damaged the new Anglo-Russian relationship. The Russians also suspected that Britain had been

³ Roger Platt Churchill, *The Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907*, (The Torch Press, Cedar Rapid, Iowa, 1939), p.2.

⁴ While the Kaiser was visiting Windsor in November 1899, Mr. Balfour mentioned that Asia was big enough to hold both Germany and Great Britain, so that there need be no unbridgeable gulf between them. But the German Foreign Minister Bernard van Bulow remained unruffled. Ibid., p.2.

⁵ Ibid., p.89.

behind moves encouraging Japan to wage what proved to be a successful war against her in 1904. All these factors caused a serious deterioration of relations between the two countries. Unperturbed, Britain continued to employ a specific diplomacy directed to maintaining a friendly attitude in her relations with Russia. On 21 October 1905, Sir Charles Harding, the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, wrote to London declaring that he had reliable knowledge that a Russian-German alliance would prove impossible to formulate.⁶

At the Algiers Conference in 1906, held to examine Germany's complaints against Britain's occupation of Egypt and France's presence in Morocco, the German government soon realised the full extent of the cordial relations among Britain, France and Russia. Sensing the futility and isolation of her position the Germans promptly left the conference with Austria as her only ally. Britain had continued to maintain a position of antipathy towards the Ottoman Empire and restrained Iran from taking any action which might upset relations with Russia. During this period, Mirza Hussein Khan-e-Ataback chose to pursue a policy agenda that sided more in favour of Russia than Britain.

4.4 Keeping Russia at bay

British and French diplomats had been planning to co-ordinate their policies in order to bring them in line with Russia. In 1904 Edward VII visited Denmark where he met the serving Russian Ambassador to Copenhagen Alexander Izvolsky. The ambassador had first hand knowledge of Britain having previously studied there, graduating from Edinburgh University. This provided a personal link with Britain and made him amenable to the King's argument of the need for sustained good relations between the two powers. Russian ambitions to take Istanbul and the Dardanelles from

⁶ Ibid., p.100.

the Ottoman Empire, and the desire to gain access to the Persian Gulf via Iran, forced her reach an agreement with Britain in 1907. By this time British politicians were of the opinion that it was better to have Russia in Istanbul than Germany in the Persian Gulf.⁷

British diplomats were altogether too experienced to sign any document that would restrict their political manoeuvrings on the international scene. In any case, British dominance over southern Iran and the Persian Gulf was absolute, and non-negotiable. Furthermore, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire was imminent and Britain needed to be free to adopt a strategy that would allow her to increase her interests and influence amidst the ruins of the ensuing break-up.

Russian ambition for control over Istanbul and the Dardanelles was so intense that she overlooked the right of part access already granted to her in the 1907 Treaty. The British Government's promise to transfer sovereignty over the Dardanelles and Istanbul to Russia, was however, conditional on the support of public opinion and subject to parliamentary approval, both of which would take time. Sir Edward Grey wrote to the Russian Government stating that he had no doubt whatsoever that if, as a result of the present negotiations the British and Russian Governments remain on good terms in Asia, then the effect on British public opinion, and on the British Government itself, would prove to be positive with regard to all other related matters.⁸

When the 1907 Treaty was submitted to the Russian Foreign Ministry's lawyer, Baron Taube, for judicial assessment, he remarked that the deal was entirely in Britain's favour. Through receiving Afghanistan and the Southern parts of Iran, Britain now had full access to the open sea. Taube went on to add that Russia was unnecessarily attracted to Istanbul, and that the northern parts of Iran being offered to them by the terms of the

⁷ Mahmood-e-Mahmood, *op. cit.*, p.367.

⁸ Roger Platt Churchill, *op. cit.*, p.160.

agreement were already under Russian.⁹ Izvolsky, Russia's foreign minister, replied to the effect that these factors were worth foregoing in order to secure Britain's support in Europe.¹⁰

When the 1907 Treaty was signed, penalisation of the Ottomans (who were biased towards Germany) assumed precedence in Britain's policy decisions. In July 1908, the young Turkish movement succeeded in ending the Sultan Abd al-Hamid dynasty. The Austrian Government, in spite of Russia's agreement for the cession of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria, questioned Russia's acquisition of Istanbul and the Dardanelles. At this point Izvolsky, disappointed and angered by this breaking of past promises, began to orient his policies away from Germany and Austria.¹¹

Thereafter the destiny of the Ottoman Empire, which had become the scapegoat of European countries' conflicts, now entered fully into the European political agenda. Iran by contrast, having been betrayed by a succession of incompetent and corrupt governments, was to have a much different and turbulent destiny.

4.5 Iran in turmoil

In the long and eventful history of Iran it is the period marking the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century that is seen as the time of monumental upheaval and irreversible change. No exploitation by past invaders, except perhaps for the Moguls, had wrought as much destruction as the corrupt and ruthless intrusions that occurred over the period 1890-1910.

⁹ Mahmood-e-Mahmood, op. cit., p.419.

¹⁰ Roger Platt Churchill, op. cit., p.339.

¹¹ From that moment he flung himself heart and soul against the central powers, Harold Nicolson, Sir Arthur Nicolson, First Lord Carnock: *A study in old diplomacy*, (Constable and Co. Ltd., London, 1931), p.279.

The country was economically crippled by a policy of outrageous and unscrupulous borrowing, much of which was used for the sole purpose of supporting the Royal court's extravagances. As the chief lenders, Russia and Britain controlled the country in an economic grip.

The former Russian Chargé d'Affaires in Iran noted that at the beginning of the twentieth century his country wanted active participation in Persian Gulf politics and trade, and therefore established a Consulate in Bushehr on the Gulf with the express purpose of establishing sea ferry crossings between Odessa and the Gulf region. In addition, Russia won exclusive planning permission for all Iranian railways which would have given it substantial control of the internal communications system had the plan not been blocked by strong British opposition.¹² The rivalry between the two powers increased when the Russians used their Cossack forces in an attempt to expand her authority over the Iranian government.¹³ The Russian strategy was to prove successful in securing a concession for opening a credit Bank in 1890 and a concession for fishing in the Caspian Sea.¹⁴

When Nasser al-Din Shah was assassinated after 50 years' of rule the country was facing economic ruin and bankruptcy. Mozafar al-Din the new King, sought a loan from Britain, but the terms were prohibitively exorbitant. In January 1900 Russia offered a loan of 22.5 million Roubles to Iran. The security for the loan was to be provided by Iran's custom duties, with the exception of those in the province of Shiraz and the ports located in the Persian Gulf. However, the bulk of this money was squandered on an

¹² B. Nikitin, *Memories*, Trans. By K. Dehghan, (Kanoon-e-Marefat, Tehran, 1974), p.48.

¹³ Firooz-e-Kazemzadeh, 'The origin and early Development of the Persian Cossack Brigade', *American Slavic and East European Review*, Vol.xv, No.3, October 1956, pp.351-363. Also: Jahanguir-e-Ghaem Maghami, *Tarikh-e-Tahavolat-e-Siasi-e-Nezam-e-Iran, As Gharn-e-Yazdah ta 1301*, Shamssi, (Entesharat-e-Elmi, Tehran, 1943).

¹⁴ For complete agreement on credit bank concession see: Ebrahim-e-Teymourian, *Assre-e-Bikhabari, Tarikh-e-Emtiazant Dar Iran*, 4th ed. (Entesharat-e-Eghbal, Tehran, 1984).

expensive tour of Europe, necessitating the acquirement of a further loan that amounted to 15 million Roubles. The security on this loan was the granting of a concession for the construction of a road from Jolfa, as well as significant adjustments to the terms of the custom dues laid down under the previous loan.¹⁵

At about this time Sir Arthur Harding, the British Ambassador to Iran, sought an oil concession from Iran on behalf of a British subject, Mr William Knox D'Arcy.¹⁶ In 1901 the concession was granted. However, Russia had also decided to export oil via the Persian Gulf, and once again Iran found itself in economic crisis. Russia willingly offered the necessary finance to alleviate the situation, but based on the following agreement:

- a) The concession to mint
- b) Renewal of the trade agreement
- c) The laying of a pipeline, through Iran to the Persian Gulf.

The third condition failed to materialise as the result of a 300 thousand pound offered by William D'Arcy, but nonetheless Iran managed to receive ten million roubles from the Russians.

As had happened in the past, Iranian disillusionment with Britain led her to adjust her policies in favour of Russia. The experience that the late Shah had acquired during his long reign, allied to the diplomatic skill of Ataback, meant that foreign influences were declining. A year and a half after the Shah was assassinated Ataback was dismissed from office. Shortly afterwards he managed to regain power continuing to govern for a further five years during which time British influence at the Royal Court waned. The British had become distracted by engagements in South Africa and Russian influence

¹⁵ Ibid., pp.401-403.

¹⁶ Sir Arthur Harding, *The Political Memories*, Trans., (Nasher-e-Ketab, Tehran, 1984), p.210.

began to increase in Iran.¹⁷ However, following their success in South Africa, and following Russia's defeat by Japan, the British began to renew their efforts in Iran. Landsdown, the Foreign Secretary, after failing in his attempts to placate Germany in Europe, began to turn his attention towards the Russian influence in Iran taking on board the views expressed by politicians such as Lord Curzon. In a reply to the Iranian King's inquiry about his views on Iran, Landsdown stated that Iranian independence had been one of Britain's principal policies and that his government was strongly committed to defending Iran against any foreign invasion.¹⁸

4.6 Iran trapped between two aggressors

Prior to the granting of the 22.5 million roubles loan to Iran by Russia, Lord Curzon had been trying to persuade his government of the importance of the Persian Gulf to Britain and the potential dangers of Russian influence in the region. He had written to Lord George Hamilton expressing his views: "It is important to me, if we could transfer some of our unnecessary anxiety about the Transvaal to Iran and the Persian Gulf, and realise that the danger is coming to our door".¹⁹

In a telegram sent to Lord Salisbury on the 3rd of February 1900, Curzon once again expressed his concern at developments in the region by referring to what he saw as Russia's hidden agenda in the granting of a loan to Iran:

We must give notice to Iran and Russia that Britain has some interests in the south of Iran and we will not tolerate any interference towards our interests.²⁰

¹⁷ Mahmood-e-Mahmood, op. cit., 8th vol., p.98.

¹⁸ *The Times*, 22 August 1902.

¹⁹ Lord Curzon, *Memories*, to Lord George Hamilton, on 3 May 1899. In *The Life of Lord Curzon*, Ronaldshay, Vol.1, (London, Ernest, 1928), p.67.

²⁰ Lord Curzon to Salisbury, No.335, 3rd Feb. 1900. F.O.60/630.

At this time the British Government was more concerned about Germany's expansion and its increased strength in trade and naval development. Viscount Cranbourn, announced the following in Parliament on the 17th of January 1902

Our position in the Persian Gulf, has both political and economic aspects, with a special merit. British superiority is the main principle of our policy in that region. This is not theoretical, but rather a reality and it is because of our exceeding interests in trade and economy throughout other countries in the Persian Gulf.²¹

On the 22nd of January he announced,

Our policy is in maintaining Iranian independence intact. This policy is not inspired only by morality, but because our interests necessitate that Iran should remain under present geographical boundaries and independence. But there are some constraints to this policy. It means that British policy should not be used as an independent motive for any power. We are fond of Iran's independence, and more than that fond of maintaining the balance of power.²²

These statements can be seen as a reaction to the failure of British policy in Iran that occurred due to a concentration and emphasis on events happening elsewhere. The various British authorities in London, India and Iran apportioned the blame for this failure at one another.²³

On 5 May 1903, Lord Landsdown issued an important statement on British policies and interests in the Persian Gulf, which became the basis for future policy-making in the region.²⁴ He announced that the British Government would consider the construction of naval houses or fortifications by any power to be a threat to their interests in the area and would vehemently oppose any such moves by all means at its disposal.²⁵

²¹ J.A. Saldanha, *Précis of Correspondence on International Rivalry and British Policy in the Persian Gulf 1872-1905*, (Simla: Government Central Press, 1906), Para.155, I.O.R.-L-P & S. 20-C. 247. Also, (Simla: Government Central Press, 1906), Para.155, I.O.R.-L-P & S. 20-C. 247. Also, *The Times*, 18 January, 1902.

²² I.O.R.-L/P & S/20-C.247, para.156.

²³ Iraj Zowghi, op. cit., p.29.

²⁴ Parliament Debates, (House of Lords, Fifth Series, Vol.23, Col.419, (27 February 1919) (hereafter cited as H.L.Deb.).

²⁵ J.G. Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman, and Central Arabia*, Vol.1, Historical, Part 1. (Calcutta, Superintendent Government, India, 1915), p.369 I.O.R.-L/P & S/20-C.91. Also *The Times*, 6 May 1903.

Zowghi argues that Britain, through the employment of manipulative diplomacy, had tried to protect her superiority in the Persian Gulf by announcing that she would vigorously oppose any threat to her interests. However, despite these announcements Britain's priority still lay in dealing with its powerful rivals in Europe, particularly in light of the French, German and Russian alliance that had been formed in the period of "armed-peace". Zowghi believes that the first decade of the twentieth century was the decade of military campaigns to secure an "armed peace" in Europe. The fragile political balance that Bismarck had forced upon Europe in 1871 under the auspices of the Frankfurt Treaty could no longer endure the strain of increasing colonial and military pressures. The "armed peace" period afforded the opportunity and possibility for a change in European colonial policies in favour of Germany, Russia and Austria. The British government, unable to engage with the opposing military alliances, was now left out in the cold. Political isolation was not a prudent option for Britain and it soon became clear that it would have to risk its interests in the colonial territories if it was to remain at the centre of political power and influence.²⁶

4.7 Britain's new policies in Iran

Britain began to adopt a policy in Iran that sought to reduce Russian influence in the area and at the same time avoid the risk of any conflict erupting between the two powers. However, two obstacles emerged in the attempts to implement these initiatives. These problems centred on the fact that the new Iranian Chancellor, Ataback, was more disposed towards dealings with Russia rather than Britain, and also the fact that the Royal Court had become more authoritarian in its approach to rule and the decision-making process. The removal of these obstacles was essential to the maintenance of balance

²⁶

Iraj Zowghi, *op. cit.*, p.33.

between Russia and Britain, and crucial in the preservation of a coherent and consistent overall foreign policy strategy.

According to Mahmood-e-Mahmood, Britain had achieved two major diplomatic victories in 1903, the treaty with Japan and peace with the South African Boers, that now allowed her to switch her attention to matters in Iran.²⁷ There was much discontent in Iran at the time, notably amongst the spiritual leaders, with regard to the way in which public affairs were handled. Mahmood-e-Mahmood, asserts that these leaders and their protests were inspired by the work of British authorities. The evidence is based on the fact that the British had control over the pious foundation fund of "Ood", and also the fact that following a visit by Sir Arthur Harding and George Churchill to Baghdad and the Holy City of Najaf, home of Grand Ayatollahs, Ataback was attacked and condemned by the Ayatollahs and had to leave Iran.²⁸ Shortly afterwards, Ataback, who had been a keen supporter of Russian influence in Iran was finally ousted from power. The bid to weaken the Royal court's authority was achieved by means of supporting freedom fighters and the drive towards constitutional revolution. Citing A. Kasravi, Mahmood argues that this revolution, far from being an assertion of people's right to live under a constitutional rather than a despotic system, was merely the means by which external powers sought to weaken the authority of central government.

When central control became weak and ineffective in most parts of the country the vacuum was filled by frequent raids and sporadic uprisings.²⁹ The British effort to introduce the spectre of constitutional reform was not a completely unique or alien idea to Iranians. The desire to have a democratic and accountable government can be found independently in Iranian intellectual literature, notably among writers who had been in

²⁷ Mahmood-e-Mahmood, op. cit., 8th vol., p.55.

²⁸ Ibid., p.99.

²⁹ Ibid., p.100.

contact with Europe and Russia. It was not a matter of surprise in the diplomatic world that Britain should have used the movement as a political vehicle for her own political ends.

However, when the constitutional government started to reform the Iranian political system through the introduction of an elected parliament, the Russians saw it as a threat to their authority and as an affront to their own domestic form of government. Therefore, they took the decision to crush the new reforms in Iran.

4.8 British disputes over policies in the region

By this time the British policy towards the Middle East had become aggressively self-interested. They adopted the so-called "two steps forward one step back" policy, which advocated a control on Russian ambitions and the taking of tough measures in response to the turbulent daily events occurring in Iran.

Nevertheless, on the 6th of September 1906, the British Ambassador in Tehran warned his government in London about the possibility of imminent aggression by Russian agencies. He noted that the Russians were jealous of the prestige and influence that Britain had among the majority of Iranians. In the same memo the ambassador explained that Russia was worried about the consequences for her southern territories of the recent reforms taking place in Iran. However, the authorities in London in response to the ambassadors concerns took no action.³⁰

On 23 June 1908 General Liakov, the Cossack division Commanding Officer, attacked the Iranian Parliament and surrounded the British embassy. He claimed he would attack the embassy if it allowed Iranians to seek asylum there.

³⁰ Grand Daff to Gary, No.234-6, 6-7 September 1906, F.O. Print. Confidential 8802. Persia 1906, I.O.R.-L/P & S/20A.

Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, sent a memo to Bendrokov, the Russian Ambassador to Iran, and explained that accusing Britain of supporting the constitutionalists in Iran was an unfounded charge. "What we don't want is Iranian asylum-seekers in our Embassy. However, consequences of such actions, as taken by your agents against us, are grave and could be disastrous to our good relations."³¹ At the same time, he sent an ultimatum to the Iranian Government demanding that it immediately withdraw all forces from the British embassy. Furthermore they should apologise to the British government for what had taken place against its embassy. In addition he demanded that the Iranian Government should uphold an amnesty for people who were in touch with the British Embassy, and guarantee the safety of all those who had sought asylum there.³²

As a result of this Russian interference the constitutionalists were defeated by the King's forces. However, mass revolt had started to gain momentum amongst the people all across the country, especially in Tabriz and Isfahan. The King's forces succeeded in recapturing Tabriz where the constitutional leaders sought, and were refused, asylum from the British consulate.³³

In June 1909 the constitutional forces departed from Isfahan and recaptured Tehran. General Liakov sought asylum in parliament and was later sent back to Russia.³⁴ On 16 June 1909 King Muhammed Ali sought asylum at the Russian Embassy before leaving for Russia. When constitutional forces had finally regained power, the Russians

³¹ Foreign Secretary to Bendrokov, 25 June 1908. I.O.R.-L/P & S/20A, 1908.

³² Correspondence regarding the affairs of Persia Dec. 1906 to Dec. 1908, Persia, No.1 (1909) ed.4581. Also, Ali Asghar-e-Shamim, *Iran Dar Doureh-e-Saltanat-e-Gajar*, (Entesharat-e-Ebnessina, Tehran, 1952), pp.418-19.

³³ Seyed Hassan-e-Taghi Zadeh, *Yaddasht Hay-e-Parakandeh-e-Mashroutiat*, (Salnameh-e-Donya, No.26, 1970), pp.257-272. Also, M. Paulvich v. Terya, Izanski, *Three Titles about Constitutional Revolution in Iran*, Trans., (Sherkat-e-Sahami-e-Ketabhay-e-jibi, Tehran, 1978), p.90.

³⁴ Monthly Memoranda in Persia, 1908-1909, 1 August 1909, F.O. Print, Persia 1909. I.O.R.-L/P & S/20A.

occupied Tabriz, Anzali, Ghazvin and Novshahr and started to build a railroad between Caucasia and Jolfa.³⁵

As has been explained, Izvolsky co-ordinated his country's policies with Britain, in relation to issues concerning Afghanistan, Iran and the Ottoman Empire. Throughout the period 1890-1910, there were a number of different views being expressed in British circles regarding policy procedures in the area. Lord Curzon, as Viceroy in India, proposed that separate areas of influence should be established and designated subject to British and Russian control. It was proposed that Iran would be divided into two distinct zones whereby Russia could be contained to the north, while British influence in the south would be free from attack, thereby safeguarding British interests in the Indian subcontinent. In a letter to Lord George Hamilton, Curzon explained that if Britain did not persuade Russia to accept the spheres of influence, which would eventually lead to the abolishment of the Iranian Kingdom, Britain would not be able to contain Russian expansion to the south.³⁶

To the contrary, Lord George Hamilton, Minister for India in the Cabinet, in a memo written to colleagues in his ministry, insisted that British influence in the north of Iran had completely vanished, whatever action was taken. Russia was therefore able to attack the north of Iran, adjacent to her territories, and Britain was not in a position to be able to resist.³⁷ He tried to support his argument for increased protection in the north by citing the case of increased German influence in the Ottoman Empire and the Gulf region.³⁸ Curzon, however, argued that Russia's desire to increase its influence was not

³⁵ Committee of Imperial Defence, *Historical Summary of Events in Territories of Ottoman Empire. Persia and Arabia affecting the British Position in the Gulf, 1907-1928*, I.O.R.-L/P & S/20-C, 247A.

³⁶ Lord Curzon to Lord George Hamilton, 21 September 1899. F.O.60/615.

³⁷ Lord George Hamilton to the Ministry of India, No.338, 3rd April 1900. I.O.R.-L/P & S/70/1899.

³⁸ Hamilton to Curzon, No.14, 6 July 1900, op. cit.

restricted solely to Iran but was based more on a willingness to test Britain's resistance to its expansionist designs.³⁹ Sir Arthur Harding, the Ambassador to Iran, voiced his support for Curzon's viewpoint in a letter to Landsdown, by suggesting the possibility of a deal between Britain and Russia in which interests in Manchuria could be traded off against those in the Persian Gulf.⁴⁰

However, after years of contemplation and the frank exchange of views, the British Foreign Secretary received a letter from the Russian Foreign Ministry in August 1907 in which Russia confirmed its acknowledgement and respect of the special interests of Britain over the Persian Gulf. The British Cabinet understood that it could announce this right in a separate declaration but refrained from doing so until the political, economic and military technicalities of a final agreement had been firmly established.⁴¹ The Treaty that finally emerged laid out the terms of involvement for both countries in dealings with Iran, Afghanistan and Tibet. It was ratified and signed on the 31st of August 1907 by Alexander Izvolsky and Sir Arthur Nicolson, the then British Ambassador to St. Petersburg.⁴² Lord Curzon had finally achieved his long-standing aim and in a letter to Hamilton, wrote him of his immense feelings of pride and happiness at the fact that his theory had been accepted and implemented by the highest of political authorities.⁴³

4.9 The 1907 Treaty

The two competing powers, Britain and Russia, had their own strategies to safeguard their interests in Iran. Britain tried to keep the Persian Gulf and its vicinity

³⁹ Curzon to Hamilton, No.127, 6 September 1900. I.O.R.-L/P & S/76/1017.

⁴⁰ Harding to Landsdown, 29 January 1902. F.O.60/660.

⁴¹ Great Britain Foreign Office, Anglo-Russian Agreement, I.O.R.-L/P & S/10/455.

⁴² Nicolson to Grey, No.178, 31 August 1907. F.O.371/515. I.O.R.-L/P & S/20A.

⁴³ Curzon to Lord Hamilton, 14 May 1903. Ronaldshy, *The Life of Lord Curzon*, Vol.2, pp.371-372.

under her control in order to keep secure the Indian subcontinent. Whilst Russia, on the other hand, tried to maintain its domination over the northern parts of Iran free from British intervention and interference. Afghanistan was designated to act as a buffer zone between the competing interests of the two powers. The 1907 Treaty had proved to an ideal agreement in satisfying Russian interest, without the risk of confrontation.⁴⁴

It is easy to understand how the 1907 Treaty helped Britain to safeguard her strategy for India⁴⁵ whilst at the same time facilitating the two countries' co-ordinated efforts in Europe.⁴⁶ However, apart from preserving its position in the Persian Gulf, Britain did not reap any great financial benefit from the agreement and had succeeded in losing Iranian trust in her integrity.

Sir Cecil Spring Rice, who was the British Ambassador in Iran in 1907, stated that Iran was now more suspicious of Britain than of Russia. At the same time he wrote a letter, in Persian, to the Iranian Government reassuring them of the honourable commitment of both powers to non-interference in its internal affairs.⁴⁷ But as Iraj Zowghi noted, even prior to the disclosure of the Treaty's contents, such assurances failed to make much impression on public opinion.⁴⁸

4.10 Iran after the constitutional reform

When King Muhammed Ali was ousted from power his son Ahmad (aged 13) became King of Iran at the time when the political scene in Iran was beginning to take shape under the British and Russian influences. The country was bankrupt and the

⁴⁴ Appendix 5, for full text of Treaty.

⁴⁵ Viscount Grey of Falladon, K.C. *Twenty-Five Years 1892-1916*, Vol.1, (The Pyerson Press, Toronto, 1952), pp.148-9.

⁴⁶ Sir George Buchanan, *My Mission to Russia and other Diplomatic Memories*, (Baston: Little Brown, Ca., 1923), Vol.1, p.91.

⁴⁷ Sir Cecil Spring Rice to Sir Edward Grey, 13 September 1907. I.O.R.-L/P & S/20A.

⁴⁸ Great Britain, Foreign Office, Persia, Foreign Office Handbook, No.80, Appendix, p.127 (London, H.M.S.O., June 1919), F.O. 373/4/16.

government was unable even to pay its own employees. Once again, loans were eagerly offered by both Britain and Russia, but with totally unacceptable conditions.⁴⁹ The Government tried unsuccessfully to borrow from private institutions, offering the Royal jewels as security.⁵⁰ Russia, as Iran's chief creditor, was opposed to and refused any further borrowing. However, when Iran agreed to clear its previous debts within 15 years, beginning in May 1911, she was able to negotiate a new loan of one-and-a-quarter-million pounds.⁵¹

The continuing presence of Russian forces in Iran, despite requests for their withdrawal, created many problems for the government. The British, distracted by events in Europe, proved unable and unwilling to intervene in the dispute. When her Ambassador in Iran, Sir George Barclay, expressed his concern at the gravity of the situation in Iran, by writing, "with these turbulences and the policy that Russia has adopted, the Government's resignation is imminent therefore, disorder and chaos will prevail",⁵² the London government still remained non-plussed. Instead, Grey replied to Barclay, "it is important that the unity of actions between the two Governments should be maintained. It is sad if the result is the resignation of the Iranian government. But we should not allow any action to hamper co-operation between Russia and Britain".⁵³

Eventually, Sir Charles Marling, at the British Embassy in Tehran, seeking to secure a balance between the Russian and British forces in Iran, recommended that British forces be sent to southern Iran. In October 1910 these forces landed on soil, and

⁴⁹ Telegrams No.226, 259, 11 May 1910. Affairs of Persia 1910, Part xxii, April-June 1910, F.O.Print, Confidential 9743, No.280, p.125, I.O.R.-L/P & S/20A.

⁵⁰ Grey to Barclay, Telegram No.147, 12 May 1910, and the letter of M. Soliguman and Brothers to the British Foreign Ministry, 14 October 1910, op. cit.

⁵¹ The Iranian Imperial Bank to Britain's Foreign Ministry, London, 1 June 1911, F.O.371/1184.

⁵² Barclay to Grey, No.62, 11 February 1910, F.O.371/956.

⁵³ Grey to Barclay, Telegram No.283, 28 September 1910, F.O.R.-L/P & S/10/10.

in the ensuing events, the Iranian foreign minister resigned and the Iranian cabinet was thrown into crisis.⁵⁴

The Iranian Government decided to employ a financial expert to organise a system to regulate the Iranian economy, as well as to introduce a more efficient tax system. In December 1910 the Iranian ambassador in Washington, with the agreement of Britain and Russia, asked the US Government to appoint a group of experts to advise on the matter.⁵⁵ The group duly arrived in Iran in May 1911 lead by Mr. Morgan Schuster. After surveying the situation Schuster suggested the establishment of an organised military-type unit to operate the proposed taxation system, recommending Major Charles B. Stock, for the job. Stock was an Englishman and long-term resident in Iran who spoke fluent Persian. However Russia, fearing some bias in Britain's favour, opposed his appointment. Britain acquiesced and Stock was posted to India.⁵⁶ This sense of suspicion has been the dominant factor determining the relations between Britain and Russia with regard to Iranian affairs.

On 17 June 1911 the ousted King, Muhammed Ali, landed in the north of Iran and with assembled forces set out to conquer Tehran. These forces were defeated en route before he and his brother escaped and returned to Russia. The Gendarm's forces then confiscated all of Muhammed Ali's brothers' properties in Tehran accusing him of tax evasion. The Russian Government intervened in the dispute and on 28 November 1911 moved its forces to Anzali in the north of the country. They demanded Schuster's expulsion and reimbursement of the expenses incurred in the Russian military operation. The Iranian Parliament rejected the request, and the Cabinet resigned. Russian forces

⁵⁴ Barclay, *A memorandum*, No.25925, 18 June 1910, titled, "The contemporary situation in Iran".
⁵⁵ Bric, to Grey (from Washington), No.10, January 1911. F.O.Print Confidential 9929, Part xxxv, No.22, p.99. I.O.R.-L/P & S/20A.

⁵⁶ Sir George Barclay to Grey, Telegram No.234, June 7 1911. Affairs of Persia, F.O. Print Confidential 9956. Part xxvii, No.34. I.O.R.-L/P & S/20A. Also File 3819/1911, Persia: Major Stock's Appointment to Treasury Gendarmerie, I.O.R.-L/P & S/10, 1950.

began to march towards Tehran at which point the British Government decided to intervene. Finally, at a conference in Paris, the representatives of Britain, Russia and France, decided that Schuster should leave Iran and that the Iranian government could henceforth employ advisors without prior consultation with either Britain or Russia. The Russians for their part agreed to withdraw their forces without seeking any reimbursement of expenses.⁵⁷

However, the British diplomatic effort did little to alter the situation as the Iranian Parliament were dissatisfied with the terms of the agreement and refused to compromise its demands. In response Russian troops captured Gazvin, near Tehran, before giving Iran five days in which to decide its fate. Finally government forces surrounded the parliament before the terms of the agreement were forced upon Iran with Mr. Morgan Schuster eventually being replaced by a Mr. Moonar from Belgium.⁵⁸

Shortly after this debacle the British Parliament declared that the territorial integrity of Iran should be assessed in the light of her neighbours interests.⁵⁹ According to Schuster, the British Government opposed the proposal that Iran should pay the expenses claimed by Russia because such a payment would place an unbearable strain the country's financial resources, Iran's roads and trade routes would become less protected and British trade as a consequence would suffer.⁶⁰ As noted before, the main reason for mutual co-operation between Britain and Russia was to offset the growing influence of Germany in Anatoly, Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf region. As long as Izvolsky remained at Russia's Foreign Ministry these undertakings would continue to be enforced. When German sympathiser succeeded in replacing Izvolsky with their own

⁵⁷ Mahmood-e-Afshar Yazdi, *Siasat-e-oroopa Dar Iran*, (Amir Kabir, Tehran, 1948), p.143.
⁵⁸ Barclay to Grey, No.17, 22 January 1912. F.O. Print Confidential 10081, Part xxix, No.334, I.O.R.-L/P & S/20A.
⁵⁹ 5 H.C. Dab., Vol.33, Cols. 157-158, (27 November 1911).
⁶⁰ Morgan Schuster, *Ekhtenagh-e-Iran*, Trans., in Persian, (Entesharat-e-Safialishah, Tehran, 1982), p.340.

representative, Sazalov, the understanding between Germany and Russia was extended and the power balance shifted. A meeting was arranged between the Kaiser and the Tzar, at Potsdam, but even before it took place the two governments had agreed upon the following:

- A. Germany should recognise Russian interest in northern Iran and not seek any concessions in that region.
- B. Russia should support Germany against Britain.
- C. Russia should co-operate with Germany in the construction of a railway link to Baghdad.
- D. Germany should not connect the Baghdad railway to the Iranian railway without the prior consent of Russia.

This Treaty was signed on 19 August 1911 in Potsdam. Furthermore, Germany recognised Russian interests as defined in the 1907 Treaty and it was agreed that Germany should be free to develop its own interests in Iran.

The British government, accused by the opposition parties of unnecessary animosity towards Germany, began to make political gestures in order to convey her willingness to set about repairing the damaged relations with that country. As a result Russia was willing to entertain a compromise policy with Britain in Iran. The significant influence of Russia in Iran had seriously destabilised the internal government, causing frequent changes in the ruling power. The erratic changes of government prevented any meaningful change occurring in the political system itself. Eventually, at a conference in London the British and Russian Foreign Secretaries decided to support Mr Ala al-Saltaneh in his bid for power by granting him substantial loans, in return for concessions allowing both countries to build a railway in Iran. On 18 August 1914 Ahmad Shah appointed Mr Mostavfi as the new Prime Minister.

4.11 Iran and Ottoman in the First World War

In August 1914, the First World War broke out. The Iranian Government had decided to remain neutral but the Ottoman Empire, because of the presence of Russian troops in Azerbaijan, was denied this possibility.⁶¹ Iran's Government asked Russia to withdraw her forces from Iran,⁶² and at the same time asked Britain to help Iran maintain her neutrality. These demands fell on deaf ears as Russia refused to withdraw her forces on the grounds of the need to protect her citizens,⁶³ and Britain, although in agreement with Iran's neutrality, did little to help her maintain it.⁶⁴ In October 1914 Ottoman forces invaded Iranian territory and became engaged in conflict with Russian troops. British forces occupied Fao in November before moving onto Basra and Abadan.⁶⁵ In January 1915, ten thousand Indian and British soldiers were deployed to Ahvaze in order to protect the oil pipelines from sabotage.⁶⁶ The Iranian Government initially decided to oppose the Ottoman forces, before later reversing its decision.⁶⁷

The Germans were active in Afghanistan and contacted the Iranian Prime Minister with a view to establishing a secret treaty with Iran.⁶⁸ The Iranian Government was cautious about this approach, envisioning German troops' advancing through Russia and occupying the north-west border of Iran. Although the British and Russian armies had managed to repel the Ottoman troops from the north-west of Iran in the spring of 1915, Germany's near victory in Europe inspired forces in Iran to adopt a more

⁶¹ Movarekh al-Saltaneh-e-Sepehr, *Iran Dar jang-e-Bozorgue 1914-18*, (Amir Kabir, Tehran, 1922), pp.89-90. Also Majaleh-e-Yaghma, 11th year, No.1, pp.10-15.

⁶² Tonlay to Grey, No.294, 5 October 1914. I.O.R.-L/P & S/487.

⁶³ Movarekh al-Saltaneh-e-Sepehr, op. cit., p.91.

⁶⁴ Iraj-Zowghi, op. cit., p.142.

⁶⁵ F.G. Moberly, *The Campaign of Mesopotamia*, Vol.1, (London: H.M.S.O. 1923), p.107.

⁶⁶ Great Britain, War Office, British Military Intelligence Service, 209/2 - W.O.V. 106/925.

⁶⁷ F.G. Moberly, *History of the Great War: operations in Persia, 1914-1919*, Based on Official Documents: under the Direction of the Historical section of the Committee of Imperial Defence, (Harrow: H.M.S.O., n.d.), pp.31-33, I.O.R.-L/P & S/20-C.234.

⁶⁸ Movarekh al-Saltaneh-e-Sepehr, op. cit., p.237.

sympathetic towards German overtures. Britain and Russia decided to establish a defence line called, "The East Persia Cordon" in the east of Iran.

Britain, suspicious of a German-Iran conspiracy against the Allied forces, in the shape of a military coup in Tehran, asked Russia to intervene. On 14 November 1915, Russian forces were deployed near Tehran. The German, Ottoman, and Austrian embassies moved out of the capital and the Committee of Iran Defence left Tehran eventually arriving in Kermanshah, which had recently become occupied by Ottoman forces.

In a bid to find a possible solution to the new situation a variety of proposals were offered by both sides, all of which proved mutually unacceptable. The outcome of this stalemate was that the Iranian Government resigned to be replaced by Mr. Farmanfarma as the new Prime Minister.

On 16 March 1916 British forces landed in the south of Iran resulting in the termination of Farmanfarma's short tenure in charge. A new government headed by Mr. Sepahdar was quickly ushered in but the political instability continued as his cabinet collapsed in the wake of the Ottoman advance towards Hamedan in June 1916. Uncertainty now prevailed and Mr. Vusuq al-Dawleh was given the ominous task of becoming the new Prime Minister.

In February 1917, British forces occupied Baghdad and Russia pushed the Turkish troops back from the west of Iran. Allied prestige in Iran was again heightened as the Turkish and German threats to Iran were diminished. By this time the Russian revolution was under way and its forces were recalled home. The British forces filled the Russian vacuum with the deployment of their north Iranian force *Norpertforce's* in the west and south-west of the Caspian Sea.

However, the consequence of these actions was the fact that Iran's neutrality was being compromised and breached by both belligerents. This situation contributed to the frequent changes of governments, most of which were merely tempered by the circumstances of war. The political instability in Iran produced no improvements in the social, political, economic and foreign affairs of the country and did little to offer hope for the prospects of future political development. In January 1918, Mostavfi was once again appointed Premier and handed the task of attempting to govern the ungovernable. In response to public pressure, he started talks with Britain regarding the withdrawal of the Southern Police Force (SPF), and the annulment of the 1907 Treaty.⁶⁹

The British, considering the 1907 Treaty to be annulled by virtue of the emergence of the new revolutionary régime in Russia, dissolved the SPF and agreed to incorporate it into the Iranian Army, provided this force was commanded by British officers. From these events it is possible to surmise that if the Russian revolution had not taken place Iran's geographical integrity would not be as it is today.

Furthermore, the British Government, influenced by the Indian Viceroy's advice and supported by evidence from Sir Charles Morley in Tehran as to the policy's merits, agreed to support a government in Iran that sought to maintain a position of neutrality. At the same time it was important to Britain that this government was able to keep the southern part of Iran safe for British interests.⁷⁰

The general dissatisfaction felt concerning the presence of British officers in the Iranian army led Mr. Mostavfi to persistently demand their removal,⁷¹ but according to

⁶⁹ Ibid., p.491.

⁷⁰ Marling to Mostavfi, attached to report No.27, Marling to Balfour, 19 April 1918. Also, in Movarekh al-Saltaneh Sepehr, op. cit., pp.493-494.

⁷¹ Mostavfi, to Marling, 18 March 1918. F.O.371/3858, File 1000/1918, parts 1 and 2, *Persia: situation and policy*, I.O.R.-L/P & S/10/734. Also, Telegrams No.240 and 241, 21 March 1918, Marling to Balfour.

Iraj Zowghi, "he did not grab the opportunities to attain the attainable goals".⁷² Eventual failure in negotiations with Britain forced the Mostavfi Cabinet to resign and the ground was prepared for what is generally viewed in Iran as the British puppet premiership of Mr Vusuq al-Dawleh.

4.12 1919 Treaty aborted

In late 1918, British forces were deployed in different parts of Iran. However, their presence no longer carried any vital economic or strategic importance and the British War Cabinet decided to call these forces home and leave Iran to its own devices.⁷³

Lord Curzon believed that as long as Russian troops were kept out of Iran the country should be governed as a British dependency. Pursuing his vision, the Foreign Office and the War Cabinet were persuaded to enter into discussions with Iran regarding the proposal.⁷⁴ Sir Percy Sycks, the Ambassador in Iran, was instructed to contact Vusuq al-Dawleh and two Cabinet ministers, Nusrat al-Dawleh and Sarem al-Dawleh. He offered them Britain's protection,⁷⁵ and bribes,⁷⁶ to secure the so-called "1919 Treaty".

According to this Treaty the independence of Iran was to be guaranteed by Britain. The British also agreed to provide the necessary advisors needed for Iranian organisations and institutions as well as the military experts for creating a unified military force for Iran. They also agreed to offer a loan to meet the expenses incurred in implementing these proposals and drew up a plan for the implementation of a

⁷² Iraj Zowghi, op. cit., p.179.

⁷³ Minutes of Meeting. CAB.23/41.20(5), pp.2-4, 30 December 1918.

⁷⁴ Great Britain's Foreign Office, *Agreement between His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Persian Government*, signed at Tehran, August 9, 1919, London, 1919, Cmd 3000/1919, Persia No.1, (1919).

⁷⁵ Copy of a letter, dated 9 August 1919, from his Majesty's Minister at Tehran to their Highnesses Vusuq al-Dawleh, Prince Firooz Nusrat al-Dawleh, Prince Sarem al-Dawleh, Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-39, Vol.IV/No.734. Enclosure 7, pp.1141-42.

⁷⁶ Iraj Zowghi, op. cit., pp.292-303.

comprehensive transportation system throughout Iran. Finally a Joint Committee of British and Iranian delegates would meet to review custom tariffs and duties.

In addition to these provisions Britain agreed to reconsider the previous treaties with Iran and to support the Iranian claims for reparations due to the damages inflicted during the war. The ground was also prepared for the beginning of fair and equitable negotiations concerning the border issues.

This treaty was a step forward for Britain in its strategy for securing the Indian subcontinent. Curzon believed that the independence and geographical integrity of Iran must be considered as an important element in the diplomatic philosophy of Great Britain.⁷⁷ He considered the disturbances and unrest in Iran to be a threat to the security of India.⁷⁸ Britain's strategy at this time was based on the establishment of a strong barrier to the south of Russia to prevent Bolshevik intrusion into India. Curzon believed that safeguarding Western Europe's imperial interests was conditional on British-Iranian friendship.⁷⁹ He found it difficult to understand why Iran could not appreciate this.⁸⁰

With the economic and strategic importance of the newly discovered oil reserves the independence of Iran from other powers came to be of great importance to Britain. Oil and its economic significance were the most decisive factors determining Middle Eastern economic, military and political relations with the outside world particularly given its importance to the economy of the industrialised West. The Middle East was also affected by the fact that the containment of the Bolshevik régime was to become the main pillar of the Western alliance for the rest of the twentieth century. This was the overriding concern on which was established NATO. In this developing

⁷⁷ Harold Nicolson, *Curzon, The Last Phase, 1919-1925: A Study in Post-war Diplomacy* (Constable, London, 1934), pp.121-122.

⁷⁸ *The Minutes of Meetings*, CAB.23/41, No.369 (10), 30 December 1918.

⁷⁹ *The Times*, 19 September, 1919.

⁸⁰ Harold Nicolson, op. cit., p.128.

international scenario Curzon had believed that Iran should be a dependency of Britain,⁸¹ as a protection against traditional Russian expansionism.

4.13 Responses to the Treaty

When news of the 1919 Treaty was made public the big cities of Iran exploded in anger and indignation. Sir Percy Sycks, in a letter to Curzon, attributed this opposition to the incitement of the people by powerful and influential clergymen like Seyed Hassan-e-Moddaress. The Russian officers serving in the Cossack regiment within Iran, and the Russian, French and American embassies in Tehran played parts in affecting public opinion and their subsequent reactions.⁸²

The American Ambassador in Tehran, in his report to Washington dated 28 August 1919, noted the strong opposition of the Iranian people to the Treaty which, according to them, ended their independence.⁸³ The American Ambassador in London, John Davis, in a reply to Lord Curzon's request for American assistance in the matter, replied that his government could not willingly accept the Treaty between Britain and Iran, unless it became clear that the Iranian government and people freely wanted it.⁸⁴

A considerable number of representatives in the US Congress, especially those who were sceptical about the good intentions of the great powers towards the world of imperial influence and dependencies, asked their government make available all the documents that had passed between Britain and America in relation to the matter so that they could carry out their own independent enquiry.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Ibid., p.130.

⁸² Sycks to Curzon, No.569, 22 August 1919, Documents on British policies 1919-39, Vol.IV, No.732, pp.1138-39.

⁸³ Foreign Relations of the USA 1919, Vol.2, pp.701-2.

⁸⁴ Ibid., pp.710-11.

⁸⁵ Congressional Record, 66th Cong. 1 Session, 58, pp.5216-5217.6086-6089.

American reactions were based on economic as well as moral grounds as this treaty served to threaten its own oil interests. The American Oil Institute (AOI), in a secret report to the American government, explained that the terms of the 1919 Treaty allocated all Iranian oil deposits to Britain with America being denied any possible benefit.⁸⁶ Even the Assistant Secretary of State expressed his concern about the restriction on American access to Iranian oil resources in the future.⁸⁷

In France the press attitude towards the Treaty was harsh, and the *Echo de Paris* suggested that "if the phrase 'independence of Iran'" in this Treaty does not mean the 'dependency of Iran', then the meaning of this word would have to be altered in the dictionaries.⁸⁸ The French Ambassador in Tehran expressed such a strong reaction to the Treaty that Lord Curzon complained about his conduct to the French Ambassador in London.⁸⁹ The Iranian newspapers, barring two that were financially supported by the government, unanimously condemned the Treaty.⁹⁰

In a long communiqué the Russian government did likewise referring to the agreement as "the yoke of slavery on the Iranian people's neck", and comparing Britain's actions to those of bandits. Sir Percy Sycks dismissed these reactions attributing them Bolsheviks' revolutionary ideological attitude.⁹¹

On 18 May 1920, Russian forces captured Anzali, a port on the Caspian Sea, thereby inflicting the first significant blow to the Treaty's standing. Mr. Norman, a senior officer in the British Embassy in Tehran, informed London that the British position was

⁸⁶ Foreign Relations of USA, 1920, Vol.1, p.365.

⁸⁷ Ibid., Vol.3, p.355.

⁸⁸ Iraj Zowghy, op. cit., p.321.

⁸⁹ Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-39, Vol.IV, No.727, pp.1135-36.

⁹⁰ Yahya Dowlat Abadi, Hayat-e-Yahya, Vol.4, (Entesharat-e-Ferdowssi, Tehran, 1982), p.129.

⁹¹ Documents on British Foreign Policy, on the 1919 Treaty, Vol.1, pp.138-39.

so unstable that Iran's attitude towards Britain was now worse than it had been towards Russia.⁹²

4.14 Inevitability of change

The 1919 Treaty had become so discredited that its effectiveness was now almost non-existent. It became clear even in the British Cabinet, that there had not been enough co-ordination between the Defence and Foreign Ministers.⁹³

Lord Curzon as the initiator and driving force behind the 1919 Treaty belonged to a generation which was planning a new empire for Britain and was therefore unable to sense the wind of change taking place in the world.

Trotsky announced in November 1917 that "all people should be informed of what was hidden in the 1907 and 1915 Treaties".⁹⁴ Harold Nicolson, noted that even Britain's most zealous and loyal friends could not defend such actions.⁹⁵

Vusuq al-Dawleh was forced to resign because of the debacle but his successors did not find the going any less tough. Faced with increasing hostility towards a problem that would not go away they found it impossible to hold elections for parliament. The political process in Iran had stagnated and it needed harsh and decisive action to get the system of government moving again.

General Ironside who was in charge of British forces holding off the Bolshevik forces deployed in the north of Iran, visited the Cossack division in November 1920. During this visit he met a tall, well-spoken, decisive and brave Iranian officer named Reza Khan.

⁹² Norman to Curzon, No.392, 18 June 1920. Documents on British Foreign Policy, Vol.VIII, No.468, pp.522-24.

⁹³ 5 H.C. Deb. Vol.130, Cols.2270-2271, 22 June 1920.

⁹⁴ Seymour Cocks, *The Secret Treaties and Understandings*, 2nd ed. (Union of Democratic Control, London, 1918), p.23.

⁹⁵ Harold Nicolson, op. cit., pp.127-128.

Ironside believed that the only way out of the current dilemma in Iran was to instigate a military coup. Having been initially impressed by Reza Khan the two men met again on the 12th of February.⁹⁶ With his impressions confirmed Ironside recommended to the King in Tehran, during a journey to Cairo, that the young Iranian officer be made commanding officer of the Cossack division. The King refused his request but six days later Reza Khan attacked and captured Tehran.

When the news broke out Ironside, still in Cairo, wrote in his diary, "Everybody believes I have planned the coup! If we talk honestly, they are right".⁹⁷ According to Hussein Makki,

Mr. Norman in Tehran was faced with a situation which seemed to him very problematic. He did not have a clear mandate from London. The Ironside visit to Tehran before leaving for Cairo, is clear evidence of mutual agreement between him and Mr. Norman for a military coup by Reza Khan.⁹⁸

Two days after the coup Seyed Zia was appointed Prime Minister and his first act of government was to annul the 1919 Treaty. Under Reza Khan's guidance there now existed a strong pseudo-nationalistic government that was capable of unifying Iran under a central system of rules and at the same time safeguarding British oil interests.

4.15 Conclusion

The First World War had made a lasting imprint on international relations across the world. This changed political arena had significantly affected the balance of the Middle East where 'Balkanisation' was now taking place in the Ottoman Empire and external interests were beginning to switch their attention to the discovery of the vast deposits of oil in the region. The economic, military and political relations of the region

⁹⁶ Hussein Makki, op. cit., 8th vol., p.15.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p.153.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p.153.

with the outside world were to be forever radically altered. The Russian Revolution in 1917 and its subsequent impact on the Middle East were to form salient variables in post-war international relations equations. Since then nationalist aspirations in the region, manifested through different forms of political ideology, have not only affected internal developments, but have also set the scene for future West-East rivalries in the area.

The next four chapters are designed to describe and explain the political, social and economic developments in the region, developments that had to be compatible with the drive of Western capitalism.

CHAPTER V

IRAN SINCE THE CONSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTION, 1906

5.1 Introduction

The European powers, in spite of their rivalries, had to accommodate their capitalist expansion programme with the regional national aspirations for modernity occurring in the Middle East. Henceforth, the way in which the new nation-states in the region were to be established and function was to become the concern of European powers for the future developments of the region. After the Congress of Vienna, in 1815, Europe entered into a long period of relative peace, which was to last for a century. The First World War in Europe ended this long-standing peace whilst at the same time restructuring Middle East relations with the outside world.

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the discovery of vast oil deposits in the area heightened the economic importance of the Middle East. Therefore, the political, military and economic developments in this region, and the ways in which they would affect the capitalist world, became a matter of vital concern for the West.

The 1917 revolution in Russia and its consequent impact on the Middle East and other parts of the world, was to be the principal variable dictating international relations in the first half of the twentieth century.

Britain and France, the victors in the First World War, had two geo-political objectives in relation to her dealings with the Middle East. First, to prevent Soviet communism from spreading to the south and into the Euro-Asian and Indian regions and secondly, to restructure the political, social, and economic establishments of the region

in a way that would be compatible with their own western capitalist interests and security.

Towards this end the Western powers sought the establishment of powerful and centralised government's in the region that were capable of ruling by force. It was felt that this type of governance would best guarantee the unimpeded flow of oil to Western industries and result in the establishment of a nationalist driven state capable of resisting the Russian influence. Furthermore, the support for the nationally driven state also served to act as a barrier to Russian expansion in the north of the country.

This chapter will deal with the main political, social and economic developments in Iran, concentrating on those issues that would determine the country's disposition in the contemporary international environment. Britain and France shared a mutual concern about the ways in which the state-building process was to be pursued under Reza Khan's rule. With these factors in mind this chapter will focus on the political-constitutional developments that were occurring in Iran at the time.

5.2 The Revolution

Arising from his critique of theories of revolution, Homa Katouzian made a number of important observations regarding the historical development of Persia in recent times:¹

- a) Persia was not a feudal society;
- b) during the nineteenth century there had been very little industrialisation and technical progress in production;
- c) there is little or no evidence for systematic growth of per capita incomes;

¹ Homa Katouzian, *The Political Economy of Modern Iran 1926-1979*, (New York University Press, New York, 1971), p.54.

- d) there was a shift of resources away from the production of food and traditional manufacturing products;
- e) this structural change did not stimulate the growth of productivity in agriculture or technical progress in manufacturing. It led, rather, to greater food and machine-made imports;
- f) there was growing inflation and balance-of-payments deficits.

To identify the Iranian revolution with contemporary theories of revolution, notably the Marxist and French models, is inappropriate. Katouzian asserts that "the causes of the Persian revolution must be sought in a combination of inseparable mental and material processes, rather than in an uncritical application of a theoretical model or models, which refer to a significantly different historical reality".² The Iranian economy had not been integrated into the international system at this time and lacked access to the new methods of manufacture and production. Therefore, according to Katouzian, the analytical comparison of nineteenth century Iran with the same period covering the rise of commercial capitalism in Western Europe is inappropriate.

The growth of foreign trade increased the fortunes and eventually the political power of Iranian merchants in their dealings with the state and its rampant despotism. However, Anglo-Russian rivalry, without taking recourse to direct colonial rule, had severely weakened the Iranian state. The Shah and his regimes increased bureaucracy were blamed for the country's subjugation. The intelligentsia thought that a political system identical to the European one would bring them security, freedom and property ownership within the framework of the established social forms of Iran.³

² Ibid., p.55.

³ Ibid., p.55.

The complex nature and position of religion, and of the religious leaders, in the Iranian social, economic and political systems, were to come to play prominent and important roles in the ensuing revolution. Fereidoon-e-Adamiyat, citing Amin al-Dawleh, a prominent politician at the time, wrote,

competence and wisdom are not the causes of the religious leaders' influence in Iran. Their unlawful judgments which damage people's rights could remove their leadership legitimacy. Unaccountable, ignorant, ruthless governments in the past, forced the people to seek asylum from these religious leaders, rather than for motives of religious belief.⁴

According to the Shi'ite viewpoint, the practical leadership of the Islamic community had been usurped by the state, against the will of God. It was the Safavids at the beginning of the sixteenth century who incorporated the Shi'ite religious dignitaries, theologians and scholars into the state system and sought to disguise their political conflicts with the orthodox Sunni Islamic Ottoman Empire in religious terms. Shi'ism as a religion lacks the church's formal hierarchy and order, which makes it possible for the unlearned and illiterate to become religious preachers and dignitaries.

However, it must be noted that the participants in the Iranian revolutions at the latter part of the nineteenth century, with the exception of those in the military bureaucratic establishment, came from all levels of society. These disparate groups joined together with the single unifying aim of destroying despotism and replacing it with a constitutional government.

The revolutionary victors in a statement typical of most revolutions promised to enforce the rule of law, guarantee political participation, safeguard personal security, as well as introduce real economic, social and personal improvements to all classes and individuals.⁵ However, when the revolutionary euphoria and rhetoric had died down the

⁴ Fereidoon-e-Adamiyat, *Ideology-e-Nehzat-e-Mashroutiat-e-Iran*, (Entesharat-e-Peyam, Tehran, 2535), pp.44-45.

⁵ H. Katouzian, op. cit., p.60.

widening gap between reality and expectation soon became clear. The political chaos, national disintegration of daily life and imperialist intervention that followed were in stark contrast to the expressed hopes for a brighter future.

Iranian scholars in their analysis of the failure of the revolution have tended to emphasise the dominance of a central issue, such as imperialist interventions, internal deficiencies in absorbing the new system, the role of religion, as forming the root cause of the movements eventual collapse. However, the development of international relations after the First World War and their subsequent effect on Iran, presaged a new kind of nationalist despotism that was to leave its 'influential' mark on the country over the next twenty-five years.

5.3 Reza Shah's despotic rule

The Russian revolution, Balkanisation of the Ottoman Empire, and the presence of foreign troops on Iranian soil, were the main international elements that were to influence the social, political and economic developments of the country. The relative democracy experienced prior to Reza Shah's soon degenerated into anarchy resulting in large-scale upheaval in the northern and southern oil fields. The country needed a powerful figure to unite it under the banner of nationality and progress and to establish new political and social institutions to begin the state building process.

The Jangle (Forest) Movement, led by a Shi'ite Muslim called Mirza Koochek Khan, was the first genuine reaction to the disillusionment which followed the constitutional revolution. The starting point for conflict came when the Bolsheviks succeeded in defeating those Russian forces loyal to the previous regime that had remained in Iran. This action was followed by British forces withdrawing from Rusht, thus allowing the Russian's to land a number of troops in Anzali. The scene was now

set for a coalition to be formed between the Jangle movements and a group of Azerbaijani Marxists led by Haidar Khan, under the moral, technical and material support of Russia. Soon afterwards, these coalition forces occupied the provincial capital of Gilan, Rusht.⁶ In July 1920, the Tudeh Party of Iran (CPI) was established in Anzali. The Iranian government immediately started negotiations with Russia for a general settlement to normalise relations between the two countries. In January 1921 the Russians declared that they would evacuate their troops from Gilan once all British forces had been withdrawn from Iran.

On 24 February a military coup d'état assumed control of the Iranian government, and two days later the Russian-Iranian Treaty of 1921 was signed. In May British forces, and in October Russian troops left Iranian territories. The Iranian army then advanced into the north of the country and in the confrontation that followed the coalition between the Jangle and Marxist movements collapsed. Their leaders, Mirza Koochek Khan and Haidar Khan were killed as a new order now emerged in Iran.⁷

Towards the end of 1923 the de facto permanent Minister of War, Reza Khan, was appointed as the new Prime Minister of Iran. He imposed order in the country by the ruthless deployment of military force the army under his command. To implement his vision for the future development of Iran he assembled a group of planners from among the younger members of the civil service and those engaged in professions with western educational backgrounds.

Reza Khan for his part presented himself to the people as an able and honest patriot. A British legation in Tehran described the former army officer as a 'strong' nationalist leader determined to effect social progress in a country not yet ready for

⁶ Ibrahim Fakhra'i, *Sardar-e-Jangal*, (Puyesh, Tehran, 1965), p.101.

⁷ E.H. Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution*, Vol.111, (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1966).

western style parliamentary democracy. The Soviet Embassy in Tehran and the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs in Moscow expressed different sentiments, viewing Reza Khan as a 'bourgeois nationalist' leader confronting reactionary feudals and their religious supporters. The Iranian public for their part viewed the new saviour of the nation as a British 'spy' who had been sent to fulfil a mission in the service of British imperialism. According to Katouzian, this attitude was mainly a retrospective projection of emotions a even Seyyed Hassan-e-Moddaress, the most tenacious opponent of Reza Khan, refused to countenance the 'spy' accusations.⁸

However, in mid-October 1925 a simple motion, signed by a number of deputies, was tabled in the parliament demanding the abolition of the Qajar dynasty and the temporary transfer of the royal title to the Prime Minister. The assembly was divided on the issue but the motion was eventually passed, thus opening a new chapter in Iranian history.⁹

During the Qajar era a centralised bureaucratic network had failed to emerge due to a number of factors such as the absolute, arbitrary and traditionalist nature of the State, the relative poverty of the country and the lack of modern communications system. The rapidly increasing power of the newly emerging State however, required a centralised military and administrative apparatus in order to effect social and economic change. The receipt from oil revenues helped the State to acquire modern technology in the pursuit of its objectives to extend, modernise and centralise the army and bureaucracy. It began to invest heavily in projects to develop roads, railways, telecommunications, and to extend the scope of higher education.

⁸ H. Katouzian, op. cit., p.81.

⁹ Hussein Makki, *Tarikh-e-Bist Saleh-e-Iran*. Vol.3, (Nashr-e-Nasher, Tehran, 1982), p.493.

Reza Shah had secured the services of individuals with extensive political and administrative skills to help him carry out his ambitious plans. Those who were opposed to what many saw as the artificial modernism of his plans were either exiled or murdered. Indeed, Katouzian has taken up this point by viewing the Shah's reforms as, "mechanistic and reducing; the science of technological universal law, and social progress to output and technology".¹⁰ He then goes on further to state that these factors are attributable to many Third World intellectuals and politicians who voluntarily allow themselves to become victims of a superficial version of European modernism called pseudo-modernism. This pseudo-modernism has become a defining characteristic of the Third World where individuals, regardless of formal ideological divisions, are alienated, both intellectually and socially, from their own culture and history. This pseudoism arises from the fact that, unlike the European modernists, they seldom have a real understanding of European ideas, values and techniques. This is why, he added, that, "industrialisation is viewed not as an objective but as an object", in Third World societies. It is for this reason that he believes that such societies should formulate relevant theories and policies, by an appropriate application of those methods and ideas which have thus far developed science and society in advanced countries.¹¹

A national Iranian Bank was established for the purpose of facilitating the financial arrangements needed to undertake these developments. The establishment of this institution also succeeded in ending the monopoly of the British-owned Imperial Bank of Persia to be the sole distributor of bank notes in Iran.

¹⁰ H. Katouzian, *op. cit.*, p.103.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.103.

Although, the direct and indirect revenues from national oil resources made up the largest single source of income for the treasury, the perennial volatility of oil revenues began to cause irritation and anxiety. This led to the abrogation of the D'Arcy concession and thereafter the conclusion of the 1933 oil agreement, which extended the previously agreed concessionary period from twenty-five to sixty years. The new agreement covered only a quarter of the D'Arcy concession but it did make reference to all known reserves and covered all areas currently under exploitation. It also changed the revenue payment, previously based on 16 per cent of the company's annual net profits, to a new level of 4 shillings per barrel produced.¹² As M. Fateh explains, the abrogation of the D'Arcy concession was detrimental to Iranian interests. He believes, as Musaddiq did, that Iran could have gained a better deal by insisting on the British responsibility to its liabilities as declared and laid down in the D'Arcy concession.¹³

The domestic tax burden at this time was being largely shouldered by the masses through a system of indirect taxation. The allocation of the State budget from 1926-1933, was entirely consistent with government development aspirations. However, it was only towards the end of this period that the State began to make direct investments in modern manufacturing plants, such as sugar mills. The upshot of the State's increased expenditure on modernising projects was the steady growth in imports and the oil revenues were increasingly relied upon to finance the consequent rise in foreign currency requirements.

The 1933 Oil Agreement coincided with the beginning of world economic recovery and the general rearmament that was eventually to lead to the Second World War. These factors ensured the growth of Iranian oil revenues and the annual budgetary

¹² Mostafa Fateh, *op. cit.*, p.305.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.306.

revenues began to rise considerably as a result.

Tables 1 and 2 show the total budgetary allocations, and their percentage breakdowns, received by the various government departments during the periods 1928 to 1933 and 1934 to 1944 respectively.

The new regime sent large numbers of Iranian students abroad to receive higher education where they soon became exposed to European technology, better standards of living and the world of new ideas. Many began to question the backwardness, poverty and despotism of Iran in comparison to European achievements and looked to concepts such as socialism and communism to provide them with possible answers.¹⁴

These young Iranian Marxists, were socially conscious modernists who wanted modern industry and technology, as well as freedom from repression and poverty. On their return to Tehran, they managed to set up a few 'party cells' but were more inclined to discuss theoretical issues (many of which were published in their covert periodical *Donya* 'The Word') than insight revolutionary uprisings. In 1937 many of these young Marxists, along with some sympathetic readers of '*Donya*', were arrested and tried on charges of attacking the constitutional monarchy and of adhering to the Communist doctrine.

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Khalil-e-Maleki, *Khaterat-e-Siasi*, ed., (Rawagh Publications, Tehran, 1979), pp.30-34.

Table 1
Average Budgetary Allocation 1928-1933

Department	Average %	Average total (Million Rials)
War	41.8	163.3
Finance	22.2	86.5
Interior	9.7	37.3
Telecommunications	6.2	23.2
Education	6.8	27.2
Justice	4.6	18.2
Imperial Court	3.2	12.5
Foreign Affairs	3.3	13.0
Industry, Trade & Transport	1.9	9.0
Agriculture	1.0	0.2
Total	100.0	391

Source: Based on Bhorier, Economic Development in Iran, Table 1.

Table 2
Average Budgetary Allocations 1934-1941

Department	Average %	Average total (Million Rials)
War	19.6	368.7
Finance	10.2	204.7
Industry and Trade	19.0	356.5
Interior	4.0	75.3
Posts and Telecommunications	2.6	48.5
Justice	2.4	44.8
Foreign Affairs	1.3	27.9
Health	2.4	45.4
Agriculture	2.5	15.3
Imperial Court	0.8	47.1
Communications	23.7	445.2
Others	6.6	123.0

Source: Table 1

When the Second World War broke out, Iran remained officially neutral, but the Shah and his army officers proved more sympathetic towards the German than Allied cause. The British strategists were worried about a general offensive drive by the Germans through Egypt to the Persian Gulf.

During the course of the war Germany attacked the Soviet Union from three directions. The southern offensive led to the capture of the Ukraine and threatened to cut through the Caucasian oilfields to the north-western border of Iran sending alarm bells ringing in Moscow and London.

The Allies began to issue warnings of serious repercussions for the Iranian government unless the activities of the German agents in Iran were curtailed. The Iranian response was dismissive, reassuring the Allies of their commitment to a policy of neutrality and the absence of any threat posed by German nationals.

The Allies, distrustful of Iranian intentions invaded Iran, on 25 August 1941. Reza Shah ordered a general mobilisation, which merely resulted in exposing the vulnerability of Iran's defence system and the inefficiency of his pseudo-modernist government in a time of crisis.

A brief review of the twenty-five years, in which Reza Shah's absolutism and arbitrary system of rule prevailed in Iran, highlights once again the dominant factors hindering the development and progress of Iran. These factors centred on British strategical interests that aimed to contain the spread of Communism and guarantee the continuation of a cheap oil flow, and the belief there can be no social and economic stability, or peaceful progress in Iran unless, as Katouzian puts it, "the most tenacious enemy - Iranian despotism - has been uprooted for ever".¹⁵ This period was also marked by the defeat of Mirza Khoosheh Khan and his allied Communist organisations in the

¹⁵ H. Katouzian, *op. cit.*, p.135.

north of the country, the continued flow of oil to the capitalist economies and the extension of the Anglo-Iranian concessions for another thirty years.

5.4 Aborted democracy 1941-1951

Facing mounting military and political pressures from the Allied forces in Iran, Reza Shah abdicated and was sent into exile, first to Mauritius and later to Johannesburg, where he died in 1944. According to Ali Sohaili, it was the British who were the main instigators in demanding his abdication and forced exile.¹⁶ The democratic regime that followed the Shah's departure saw the rise of a nationalist government which Dr. M. Musaddiq, which nationalised the Anglo-Iranian oil company. This regime too fell prey to the designs of external powers and was eventually ousted in a coup d'état in 1953.

The Shah's departure had created a period of relative freedom where political, and religious meetings could now be held openly, newspapers and books were free from political censorship and people could express their opinions freely. In addition, all properties sequestrated by the Shah and his apparatchiki were now returned to their original owners by order of the courts.

However, the occupying forces continued to intervene in the internal affairs of Iran, most notably by using Iranian resources through the government's unlimited credit. While the British paid back the full amount of their credit, the Soviet Union delayed repayment until late 1955. The economic situation in the country worsened when the limited supply of Iranian goods coupled with a fourfold increase in the money supply resulted in a spiralling inflation. The occupying forces added to these problems by agreeing to pay back all they grants that they had received from Iran in devalued

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I. Kajeh Nuri, *Bazigaran-e-Asr-e-Tala'i*, (Chap-e-Elmi, Tehran, 1976), pp.180-90.

Rials upon termination of the war. Circumstances began to worsen as the shortage of basic food stuffs led to hunger and famine in the large Iranian cities. When the war ended the British and American forces, bound by the terms of a previous agreement signed between Iran and the Allies, withdrew from Iranian soil. The Russians however refused to withdraw their forces from Iran. This resulted in the establishment of the Truman ultimatum, which in return for an unguaranteed promise by the Iranian government for future concession in Iran's North oil fields, later refused by the Iranian parliament, Russian occupation was brought to an end.

Reza Shah's departure did not create as expected a power vacuum in Iran. The government apparatus had remained intact and members of Parliament now found themselves with the authority to appoint and dismiss governments. The preceding events had resulted in the diffusion and fragmentation of despotism without any real democratic system of government being available to replace it. The establishment, many of whose members were unhappy with their own reduction and loss of dignity under the old Shah, rallied around the new Shah in order to minimise their actual or potential losses. The situation led to the establishment of competitive political groupings and rival political factions and parties.

The Tudeh Party, along a coalition of various progressive groups of anti-despotism and liberal tendencies, came into being at this time. The party had the semblance of a popular national democratic front, rather than an ideological political party. The uprising and declaration of provincial autonomy in Azerbaijan gave rise to internal differences in the party and consequently non-Marxist members withdrew from the Tudeh Party. The party began to increasingly take on the appearance of a Communist party before internal struggles led to a split in 1948. The party was banned by an Act of Parliament in 1949 after being accused of involvement in an attempt to

assassinate the Shah. When the Tudeh Party was eventually allowed to actively participate in the ideological development of Iranian society conservative forces tried to counter these developments by establishing their own parties to protect their own political and economic interests.

In 1949 Dr. M. Musaddiq, while conducting a campaign against the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, led a large crowd to the Royal Palace in protest against the Government's manipulation of the general elections. A delegation of nineteen leading members, including Musaddiq himself, was finally admitted into the Palace garden to voice their demands. Later they issued a public communiqué declaring the formation of the National Front.

With the fall of Reza Shah, the Azerbaijanis and Kurds began to demand greater justice and recognition of their rights. The movement for home rule gathered momentum receiving a good deal of support from a wide spectrum of opinion in Tehran itself. The Democratic Party of Azerbaijan was reconstituted and Sayyed Ja'far Pishe-e-Vari, an old democrat who later turned to Communism, became its leader before being elected in the fourteenth session of Parliament.

Due to the intervention of Soviet forces in the elections and Pishe-e-Vari's stated views on Azerbaijan, he was refused entry to office by a majority of elected deputies. He moved back to Tabriz, the provincial capital, where he began to lead the movement for autonomy. A provincial assembly was then elected, and in December 1945 the army division located in Tabriz was disarmed by Russian forces without conflict or loss of life. Access to the area was still under Soviet occupation and it was therefore impossible for the central government to initiate any reciprocal military action in the

area. The central government's failure to settle the Azerbaijani question prepared the ground for the nomination of Ahmad Qavam as Prime Minister.¹⁷

Qavam's strategy facing the Azerbaijani question was based on appeasement of the Soviet Union by dangling a 'carrot'; that is, the North Iranian Oil Concession. The 'stick' was the pressure coming through the United States and the United Nations for the withdrawal of Soviet forces. Qavam sought to steer a middle course between the Tudeh Party and the Azerbaijani Democrats on the one hand, and the Conservative grouping on the other, as Katouzian explains.¹⁸

Qavam led a delegation to Moscow and conducted personal negotiations with Stalin and Molotov for three weeks, but without apparent success. In March 1946, the American government gave Stalin an ultimatum to withdraw his forces from Iran or face direct American intervention. By the end of March a full agreement was reached with the then Soviet Ambassador, Sadchikov, by which a fifty year's concession for North Iranian oil, was granted to the Soviet Union. According to this agreement the withdrawal of Soviet troops was guaranteed, and an amicable settlement of the Azerbaijani question was anticipated.

However, in December 1946 government troops advanced into the Azerbaijan province. Pish-e-Vari escaped to Russia. During the period of occupation the instability led to supply shortages, high inflation and a lack of investment. Unemployment and widespread poverty were the consequences. The social, political and economic situation weakened the despotic apparatus, but strengthened the position of the landlords.

¹⁷ Hussein-e-Key Ostovan, *Siasat-e-Movazeneh-e-Manfi*, 2nd vol., (Musaddiq Publication, Tehran, 1950), p.110, Khalil-e-Maleki, op. cit., p.44.

¹⁸ H. Katouzian, op. cit., p.153.

Although the oil revenues provided some camouflage for the real depression of the urban sector, it had a destabilising effect. The North Iranian Oil and the 1933 oil agreement focused attention on the whole question of Iranian oil resources and revenues. The new era of political freedom made it possible for organised labour to participate in industrial and political activities.

Events began to change rapidly as Parliament refused to ratify the concession granted to the Soviet Union and Musaddiq began to emerge as the leading and crucial figure in formulating the oil question. He argued that the oil concession, as a predominantly international problem involving the vested interests of Britain, was the main cause of foreign interference and manipulation in the Iranian political economy. If Iran wanted to achieve real sovereignty and independence, it had to permanently rid itself of this foreign dominated.

The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company tried to settle these differences by offering a compromised package deal that was refused by the Iranian Parliament. In the spring of 1949 a Constituent Assembly tried to empower the Shah to dismiss one or both of the legislative chambers. Public opinion and pre-eminent politicians alike were strongly opposed to this idea and it soon became clear that the situation required a strong individual to deal with the mounting problems.

General Ali Razmara, the Iranian Chief of Staff, was appointed as the new Prime Minister. He used a sophisticated political strategy that tried to improve Iran's position by allaying the fears and concerns of the British, Russians and Americans.

However, Razmara lacked popular support for his ideas, receiving criticism from both the Shah and Mussadiq's nationalist movement. In March 1951, a member of the Islamic movement, Khalil Tahmasebi, assassinated Razmara. This assassination led to a

rapid chain of political developments that culminated in oil nationalisation for Iran and the rest of the oil producing countries.

5.5 The Popular Movement in Iran

The assassination of Razmara, in the midst of the movement for oil nationalisation, placed the Conservative groups in a state of confusion and anxiety. They decided against supporting Musaddiq, but tolerated his government as the least of the potentially successful evils. When Musaddiq's power began to wane, they rallied around the new Shah. The position of the other rentier elements in this debacle - speculators, big businessmen in import and export - remained almost identical with that of the landlords.

The Tudeh Party for its part was initially hostile towards Musaddiq's campaign for oil nationalisation, and instructed their members to direct "the sharp edge of the attack" against the National Front.¹⁹ This attitude could be explained by the total commitment of the Party to the Stalinist interpretation of Marxist-Leninist ideology. This upheld the doctrine of the precedence of "the world proletariat" over local interests. They saw oil nationalisation - which included north Persian oil - as an imperialist conspiracy directed against Russia.

The Soviet's whilst not directly opposed to Musaddiq, did little to offer him any support or help. Their policy towards Iran is perhaps evidenced by their procrastination in relation to the war debt repayment issue.

From the Soviet point of view, and in the light of its developing global strategy, it preferred any type of Iranian government to one that was friendly towards America. There have been suggestions that Russia at this stage had entered a tacit understanding

¹⁹ International Party Publications, *Nashrieh-e-Talimati*, No.12, 1951.

with Britain in order to keep American influence out of the Middle East. The similarity of viewpoint between the conservative opponents of Musaddiq to that of the Tudeh Party leadership - for the description of whose motives Musaddiq characteristically invented the term 'oil communist' (Tudeh-nafty) - seemed to lend credence to this hypothesis.²⁰ Indeed, a national, uncorrupt, democratic and popular Iranian government was also not favoured by the Soviets as such a government, supported by vast natural resources, capable of bringing freedom, justice and security to society, could not possibly be accommodated into the overall strategy of world Communism. As Khrushchev so euphemistically put it, Russia was waiting for the 'rotten apple' to fall.

The Democratic Party in America and the Labour Party in Britain were in power during the Iranian oil nationalisation campaign. However, by the time nationalisation had been achieved, both parties were disunited and reaching the end of their terms of office. Indeed, despite these political weaknesses, in the case of Britain, it was not the attitude of the Labour government that was to prove the key factor in determining the course of Iranian affairs. Popular attitudes - and, especially, the attitude of the British establishment and press, which misguided public opinion - were to form the main elements in determining the progress of events regarding the oil nationalisation issue.²¹

However, due to American pressure, and partly because of the attitude of the Parliamentary Labour Party, especially its left wing, the possibility of occupying the Iranian oil fields was removed as a policy option.

The Americans regarded Musaddiq as offering the best alternative to the rise of Communism in Iran and began to adopt the role of mediator. Furthermore, being opposed to old style colonialism in general, and under the influence of the American oil

²⁰ H. Katouzian, op. cit., p.167.

²¹ Hamid Enayat, *The British Public Opinion and the Persian Oil Crisis*, an extended and unpublished MA dissertation, (University of London, 1958).

companies, they hoped to get 'a foot in the door' in any final settlement.²² This attitude was to remain a policy constant even after the Republican success in the American Presidential election of 1953 and Musaddiq's continued intransigence. The British for their part sought to undermine any alternative efforts seeking compromise.²³ As the Iranian political economy sank into economic depression, and the imaginary threat of a Communist bid for power loomed ever larger, the two powers instigated a coup d'état, against Musaddiq and the short lived experiment in Iranian democracy.²⁴

The failure of the popular democratic movement, founded and symbolised by Musaddiq himself, was a blow to the Iranian political economy from which it would not fully recover for many decades to come. The coup was not simply a defeat for oil nationalisation but was to have far reaching ramifications for the social, political and economic fate of the Iranian people. It prepared the ground for the resurgence of despotism, in the most destructive and hideous form Iran was ever to experience.

Oil nationalisation was only one strategy in a war for sovereignty and democracy. As Katouzian puts it, it was a major means to a greater end. For this reason, Musaddiq should have disregarded the reaction of romantic idealists and Stalinist slander and sought the best 'possible' terms for the country and its future from his position of strength. He should have disregarded the spineless demagogues in his own entourage, all of whom by their very nature, or their interests, would have come into line with the socio-political success which would have followed such a settlement.²⁵

²² For the British and American rivalry in the 20th century, see: David Dimbleby and David Reynolds, *An Ocean Apart*, (BBC documentary, BBC Books, Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1988).

²³ Muhammed Musaddiq, *Khaterat va Taalomat*, (A. Wheaton & Co. Ltd., Exeter, 1986).

²⁴ C.M. Woodhouse, *The Autobiography of C.M. Woodhouse, Something Ventured*, (Granada Publishing, London, 1982),

²⁵ H. Katouzian, *op. cit.*, p.181.

However, the political significance of the oil dispute was not the only issue at stake. Table 3 presents tangible support for the economic argument in favour of Iranian oil nationalisation. This table is a rearrangement and extension of the AIOC's published accounts for 1948.

Table 3
AIOC Income and Expenditure 1948

	£m	% of total
Net income (gross tax payments)	79	100.0
Tax paid to British Government	28	35.5
Capital investment, retained profits, etc.	34	43.1
Other non-Iranian shareholders	-	-
Revenues paid to Iranian government	10	12.7

Source: based on the AIOC's published accounts, quoted by Musaddiq as chairman of the Majlis Special Commission for Oil, 17 October 1950.

Table 4

AIOC Income and Expenditure Total 1933-49

	£m	% of total	% net profit
Net income	895	100.0	-
Tax paid to Britain	175	19.5	-
Net profit (net income minus tax)	720	81.5	100.0
Capital investment	500	55.8	69.4
Dividends, etc. (paid to British and non-Iranian shareholders)	115	12.8	16.0
Revenues paid to Iran	105	11.9	14.0

Source: Based on the figures in Mussadiq's "Message to the people of Iran" in Ettelaat, 30 August 1951.

Musaddiq, in an official address to the nation, produced figures covering the whole of the 1933-49 period. These figures, which are consistent with the company figures shown in Table 4, show that total revenues paid to Iran were only 11.9 per cent of the total net income (gross tax payments) of the company. They were less than the 19.5 per cent in taxes paid to the British Government and less than the 12.8 per cent payment to company shareholders. Tax payments, to which the Iranian government was entitled to under the D'Arcy concession of 1903, totalled less than 16 per cent.

Therefore, under the 1933 agreement, which had extended the period of concession for another thirty three years, over 88% of the total income arising from Iran's prime natural resource, (exacerbated by the fact that they also had to fund capital investment and other costs) was being paid out to or retained by Britain.

In spite of the political instability that arose from the British oil blockade, the American refusal to grant financial aid, and the Soviet refusal to repay its wartime debts

to Iran, Musaddiq's government continued to persevere with its programme of reform. This they were able to pursue through a pervasive economic realism and the people's willingness to put up with material hardship for the sake of greater social objectives.

Table 5 shows the country's economic performance over the Musaddiq period of office. Its achievements are attributable to the Iranian people's co-operation with a non-corrupt government, in the right socio-political atmosphere. The government knew that the situation could not continue in the long run without an honourable settlement involving all parties but failed to take the necessary steps to bring about such an equitable end to the dispute.

Musaddiq decided to increase the money supply in order to expand domestic economic activity but withheld the nature of his intention until the last minute in order to avoid speculative trading. He seized this opportunity as a pretext for censuring the government, which resulted in the tactical mistake of holding a referendum for the closure of the Majlis in August 1953 two weeks before the coup.

Table 5

The Non-oil Balance of Trade, 1948-53 (Million Rials)

Year	Export	Import	Balance
1948	1867	5480	-3613
1949	1785	9320	-7535
1950	3563	7109	-3546
1951	4391	7405	-3014
1952	5832	5206	+ 626
1953	8426	5726	+2670

Source: Foreign Trade, Ministry of the Economy 1966.

5.6 Economic liberalism and dictatorship

The coup d'état of August 1953 occurred with relative ease. The CIA provided the organisational technique and the whole operation was financed by the American government through its Ambassador in Iran, Ray Henderson. The domestic forces involved in the incident included members of the army and police still loyal to the Shah, as well as certain lumpen elements - a part of the urban communal life normally employed for both good and evil.

British and American motives for the coup are rather obvious. The most powerful support for their actions within Iran came from the ranks of Conservative political and religious groups. These forces were principally made up of landlords, old school politicians, a powerful faction among the ulama and their followers, and an enclave of big merchants in the import sector. The economic depression caused by the non-receipt of oil revenues had caused much uncertainty and persuaded the Conservative forces to commit themselves to the overthrow of the government. Their opportunity arose following Mussadiq's call for a referendum to decide on his proposals to close the Majlis in August 1953.

The Tudeh Party²⁶ was to remain inactive during the course of the ensuing events despite being in possession of a large and disciplined civilian organisation and an extensive secret military network, which included 600 able and intelligent officers. It is also hard to understand why they remained inactive for so long after the coup and thereby allowed the consolidation of the Shah-Zahedi régime the destruction of their entire party apparatus in Iran. Contrary to the claims of its leaders²⁷ the answer is to be found in a combination of: (a) the Russian preference for a government doomed to

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The party of "masses", the Iranian name for Communist Party.

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Fereidoon-e-Keshavarz, *Man Mottaham Mikonam*, (Ravagh Publication, Tehran, 1977), pp.140-41.

collapse sooner or later; (b) the tacit belief that the West, especially America, would not tolerate a socialist, let alone a communist, government in Iran; (c) the anger felt over Musaddiq's use of terms such as 'Tudeh Nafti', and the belief that he was in league with British agents were in evidence; (d) the non-revolutionary attitude of party leaders.

However, James Bill believes that American intervention in Iran, known as operation 'Ajax',

could not have succeeded without substantial Iranian participation. Yet, the Iranians could or would not have acted without American/British direction and its corresponding psychological involvement.²⁸ In August 1953 the Zahedi cabinet was announced. One-third of the Cabinet were generals, and the Shah chose to rule by bayonet rather than the ballot.²⁹

The new régime blatantly rigged the 1954 election. The Shah eventually built a new foundation of political support, based on an alliance of the wealthy landed élite and traditional bureaucratic and Bazaari middle-classes, through a system of political and economic bribery.³⁰ In the words of James Bill,

the new régime developed a three-pronged political policy to dispose of any actual or potential opposition. The prongs included: coercion and destruction; repression and control; surveillance and accommodation. Each policy prong was directed towards a different opposition element. These were the Tudeh Party, the National Front, and religious hierarchy, respectively. The first order of business was the Tudeh Party.³¹

In early 1955 Zahedi was dismissed and sent to Switzerland for medical treatment. Saying his last farewell to a few personal friends, he declared, "Poor Dr. Musaddiq was right after all".³²

Hussein Ala, succeeded Zahedi, only to be replaced himself a short time afterwards by Dr Manuchehr-e-Ighbal. The Zahedi Ministry had laid out a number of definite policy objectives: consolidation of the régime's power, break up of the Popular

²⁸ James A. Bill, *The Eagle and the Lion*, (Vail-Ballou Press, New York, 1988), p.99.

²⁹ Ibid., p.98.

³⁰ Ibid., p.99.

³¹ Ibid., p.100.

³² H. Katouzian, op. cit., p.196.

Movement, destruction of the Tudeh Party and the conclusion of the oil agreement. Through the help of large American financial and military aid packages the political economy of the country was eventually normalised. The Shah, who was strongly averse to power-sharing, even with the landlords, religious leaders, and the old school politicians then began his moves to assume total control of power.³³

5.7 Foreign relations

In the nineteen fifties and sixties, the Western and especially American, 'modernisation' programme, dominated by ideas of 'land reform', 'parliamentary government', 'liberal economic' policies, became the dominant framework for dealings with underdeveloped countries. In Iran, the Shah had managed to accomplish and enforce an eschewed version of all these proposals, with the exception of those relating to land reform. He adopted the two party political system within the existing constitutional framework, ushering in a period that came to be known as the "Shah's positive nationalism".

To ensure its regional isolation and contain the spread of communist ideology the Western powers sought to exclude Russia from the affairs of the Middle East. As a bulwark against Russian expansion they began to supply the Iranian army with military equipment and press for the formation of a regional military pact. The result of these efforts was the signing of the Baghdad Pact whose main purpose, unlike that of NATO, was not so much to defend the member countries against soviet invasion, but rather to prevent internal Communist subversion.

The Russians, believing that the regime in Iran was here to stay, began attempts to establish realistic and cordial relations with the Shah. In 1958, a high-level Russian

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Ibid., p.197.

delegation arrived in Tehran to sign a Non-Aggression Treaty with Iran. The Russians were even ready to withdraw article 6 of the 1921 Iran-Soviet Treaty, according to which Soviet troops could enter Iran if Soviet security was threatened by a foreign power operating in Iran, in a bid to reach an agreement. At the last moment, however, Iran pulled out of negotiations deciding instead to sign mutual defence pact with America. The Soviet's countered with an anti-Shah propaganda campaign that continued until 1963.

5.8 The economy (1955-62)

The Anglo-Iranian oil dispute had resulted in the disruption of the first seven-year plan. In 1955 the Plan Organisation was turned into a permanent body and began to prepare the implementation of a second seven-year plan covering the period 1955-62. The new plan was to have an expenditure budget three and a half times the size of the original one.

Table 6, shows the projected and actual expenditure of the plan. This clearly demonstrates the influence of Western approaches to economic development by giving priority to infrastructure, followed by agriculture and then industry.

Table 6

The Second Plan (1955-62). Projected and Actual Expenditures

	Projected		Actual	
	000M. Rials	% of Total	000M. Rials	% of total
Infrastructure	41.3	59.0	42.1	48.0
- Transport and Telecommunications	(22.9)	(33.0)	(30.4)	(35.0)
- Public utilities	(18.4)	(26.0)	(11.7)	(13.0)
Agriculture	18.3	26.0	18.9	22.0
Industry and mines	10.6	15.0	6.7	8.0
Regional Programme	-	-	12.2	14.0
Unanticipated cost	-	-	7.1	8.0
Total	70.2	100.0	87.2	100.0

Source: Tehran: Plan Organisation, 1956 and 1960.

Expenditures on public utilities, social services, industry and mines were significantly less than planned. In agriculture, much of the investment was wasted in the construction of hydro-electric dams none of which succeeded in bringing any significant improvements to the industry. The gap between planning and reality is clearly evidenced in the example of the chemical-fertiliser plant in Shiraze, which was shut down for six months of the year for want of customers.

To finance the plan's projected expenditure 75 per cent of the country's oil revenues were set aside. According to the Central Bank, available financial capital in foreign exchange for the period (1955-62) amounted to £2129 million in oil revenues and £1278 million in foreign aid and investment. Overall the total foreign exchange figure amounted to 17 per cent of the total national income. However, by the 1960s little economic progress had been made in the country despite the fact that economists

generally believe that 12 per cent of national income is enough to ensure steady economic growth. For Katouzian the situation was clear, "the country was bankrupt".³⁴

Table 7 shows the balance of trade and payments during this period. It paints a telling picture of the decline of Iran's traditional (non-oil) exports, the invasion of the Iranian market by foreign goods, the squandering of the oil revenues, the corruption of the state and its officials, and the enrichment of a small state clientele through the misdirection of oil revenues.

It is clear that without the receipt of \$1278 million in aid, the import of goods would not have been as high as shown in the table. However, even such receipts could not hide the failure of 'the open door policy'. A chronic balance of payments deficit, distinct from the balance-of-trade, was further proof of the worsening economic crisis.

Table 7

Balance of Trade 1954-62 (\$m)

year	oil revenues	Non oil export	Imports of goods	Balance excluding oil revenues	Balance including oil revenues
1954	10	135	106	25	35
1955	88	106	143	-37	11
1956	146	104	345	-241	-95
1957	167	109	429	-320	-153
1958	291	104	610	-506	-215
1959	323	101	656	-555	-232
1960	364	110	693	-583	-219
1961	395	126	620	-494	-99
1962	443	113	551	-438	-5

Source: Official trade statistics by the Ministry of Economics 1966.

³⁴

Ibid., p.206.

5.9 Socio-economic situation (1955-1962)

The urban 'middle class' which, in compliance with the Western policy towards developing countries, were created to provide the social stable base for the regime began to display the signs of W.W. Rostow's *Stages of Economic Growth*; of 'tradition', 'transition', and 'high mass consumption'. The increased speculation in urban land at the expense of ordinary homebuyers and tenants and the massive circulation of bills of exchange had created an unstable and volatile market by 1959. Rural-urban migration, especially to Tehran, caused an 'urban dualism'; in the case of Tehran the wealthy were located in the north and the poor and displaced in the southern parts of the city. Social division became increasingly blatant and visible. This problem was acerbated by the unplanned expansion of secondary, and to a much smaller extent higher education, which now gave rise to an army of jobless school leavers and graduates.

By 1960, the cumulative balance of payments deficit, unemployment, a high rate of inflation and unprecedented state expenditure, were the end results of the "open-door" policy of the Shah's pseudo-modernist programme, inflicting new levels of damage to the fabric of Iranian society. The state of Iranian society and its economy in this period shows the nature of its dependence on the capitalist system. This is clearly highlighted by the mass consumption of imported manufactured goods and the export of raw materials, which saw Iran exhibiting the characteristics and weaknesses of a rentier state.

5.10 Uneven economic development

In September 1961 T. Cayler Young, in an article in the *Journal of Foreign Affairs*, wrote:

the United States, has furnished Iran with more than a billion dollars in economic and military aid. Like it or not, justly or unjustly, this has served to identify the United States with the Shah's regime, together with responsibility for what that regime has done, or failed to do. Also, however unjustly, popular opinion holds that the sums have been wasted as far as helping the common people of Iran is concerned.³⁵

In September 1961, Abul Hassan Ebtehaj, then Head of Plan Organisation, in a speech before the International Industrial Conference in San Francisco, criticised the concept of bilateral aid programs:

The US was loved and respected as no other country, and without having given a penny of aid. Now, after more than \$1 billion of loans and grants, America is neither loved nor respected.³⁶

In America leading Democrats, such as Senators John F. Kennedy and William Fulbright, began to criticise the Republican attitude towards corrupt regimes in underdeveloped countries, signalling Iran out for special mention. In November 1960 John F. Kennedy was elected as the new President of America and in his inaugural address of January, made the following reference to the Third World:

To those people in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves...If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich.³⁷

President Kennedy's emphasis on economic development, reform, and democratic revolution was ultimately an attempt to preserve the political status quo in

³⁵ T. Cayler Young, Iran in Continuing Crisis, *Foreign Affairs Journal*, 40, January 1962, pp.291-92.

³⁶ A.H. Ebtehaj, *A Program for Economic Growth*, (San Francisco, Calif., Sept. 1961), p.4.

³⁷ Quoted from "The Inaugural Address of John F. Kennedy", Jan. 20, 1961, in George W. Johnson, ed., *The Kennedy Press Conference*, (New York: Earl M. Coleman Enterprises, 1978), p.40.

those countries challenged by Communism.³⁸ Kennedy first became concerned about Iran in April 1961, when Premier Nikita Khrushchev in his discussion with Walter Lippman on 10 April 1961, stated his firm prediction of the inevitability of revolution in Iran.³⁹ Lippman not only emphasised the nature of the threat, but also reinforced Kennedy's policy predisposition. Kennedy relied on the advice of his brother Robert Kennedy and William B. Douglas to direct his actions regarding Iran. The latter, having acquired an innate knowledge of Iranian society through his travels and time spent living in the country, expressed his scepticism about the Shah's style of government.⁴⁰

At the Department of State, Iran analyst John W. Bowling in his February 1961 report, weighed up the merits of replacing the present regime with a more broad based populist one. He noted that, "a proper appreciation of the choice could only be made in the light of global and national security considerations".⁴¹ In his second report on March 20 1961 he listed fourteen specific suggestions that would enable the Shah to deflect the serious challenge posed by the urban middle class. According to James J. Bill, this important list became, in some ways, the blueprint of the Shah's reform programme.⁴² It is perhaps worth ironically noting that the second item of the list was a suggestion for the Shah to "dump his family, or most of it, in Europe".⁴³

During this time the Shah faced two main challenges to his rule. The first came from the National Front, an organisation that lacked even a minimal political

³⁸ James J. Bill, op. cit., p.132.

³⁹ Walter Lippman, *The Coming Tests with Russia*, (Little Brown, Boston, 1961), p.16.,

⁴⁰ James J. Bill, op. cit., p.133. See also: William B. Douglas, *Strange Lands and Friendly People*, (Harper & Row, New York, 1951), and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *Robert Kennedy and His Time*, (Ballantine Books, New York, 1978), p.469.

⁴¹ J.W. Bowling, U.S. Department of State, NEA/Greece, Turkey, Iran, *The Current Situation in Iran*, pp.8-9. Part of the document is reproduced in Alexander and Nanes, ed., *The U.S. and Iran*, (Aletheia Books, 1980), pp.315-22.

⁴² James J. Bill, op. cit., p.134.

⁴³ J.W. Bowling, U.S. Department of State, NEA/Greece, Turkey, Iran, "Political Characteristics of the Iranian Urban Middle Class and Implications Thereof for U.S. Policy", pp.7-8. Reproduced in Part in Alexander and Nanes, *U.S. and Iran*, pp.322-29.

programme, and the second centred on group of politicians gathered around Ali Amini. Mr. M.H. Ghashghaii, the former MP and influential supporter of the National Front, told me, that "I had to ask the Front to participate in government, if they wished", but their reply was, "we don't trust the Shah's promises". (Personal communication) The Shah chose to ally himself with Amini, due to the level of American support that the latter had, and to avoid reopening the old disputes that existed between himself and the National Front.

Amini's strategy to offset any opposition, as Khatouzian argues, was simply to grant important concessions to the National Front in return for their tacit neutrality toward his government. Thereafter he began to implement policies that sought to undermine the Shah's power and authority. However, the Shah for his part began to engage in domestic and international manoeuvrings of force and intrigue to rid himself of Amini and the National Front. Racketeers and armed thugs were employed in a process of intimidation, whilst at the same time in a bid to gain the support of landowners he decried the land reform programme as an American backed plot against Iran. The full level of the extent of his deceit was clearly shown when he visited Kennedy in Washington and in a complete volte face declared his full support for land reform.

In July 1962 differences over the size of defence expenditure between the Shah and Amini brought about the government's resignation. Much to Amini's surprise the Americans did nothing to intervene in the situation. Furthermore, having first secured the Americans' support, the Shah then went on to make a deal with Russia, which discredited the Tudeh Party and removed them as potential source of opposition. He then went on to declare that by virtue of his six point plan of reform he had in effect created a revolution for Iranian society by his own hand. The Conservative elements of

society, unhappy with the reform - especially the land distribution and women's right to vote - challenged the Shah's so-called revolution. The most important challenge came from the religious leaders Ayatollahs, Khomeini, Shari'atmadari and Milani.

On 6 June 1963 riots erupted all over Iran. The Shah ordered his troops to "shoot to kill" in a bid to quell the disturbances. The late General Iraj Aminafshar told me the order of that day was "kill to the last bullet available". This uprising was not purely religious, or conservative, nor even purely radical or democratic but an expression of the people's deep sense of dissatisfaction with the government. Nevertheless, A.K.S. Lambton wrote, "...what is interesting is the extent to which political opposition still tends to manifest itself in a religious guise".⁴⁴

Between 1960 and 1963 the economic situation was conditioned by the political conflicts and power struggles. The previous boom, inflation and balance of payments deficit had forced the state to tighten credit, impose import surcharges, reduce public expenditure and to seek help from abroad. These policies had resulted in a number of bankruptcies and bank failures with the cast the country into a period of severe economic depression.

The caretaker cabinet of Alam that presided over the crisis was soon replaced by a new one consisting of intellectuals and technocrats, some of whom were converted from the Tudeh Party, led by Hassan Ali Mansur. However, they lacked the principles expected of public figures and were in fact no more than servants and lackies of the Shah.

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A.K.S. Lambton, *On the Position of Marja' al-taqlid*, in *Studia Islamica*, 1964. See further her, *The Persian Land Reform*, (Oxford University Press, London, 1970).

On October 13, 1964 Parliament approved a law that provided all American military personnel and their dependants stationed in Iran with the status and protection of full diplomatic immunity. Almost two weeks Ayatollah Khomeini attacked the Shah and America for destroying the dignity, integrity and autonomy of Iran signalling the beginning of the next decade's political upheaval.

Iranian-American relations in the 1960s were accompanied by the gradual hardening of the Shah's system of control. Between 1964 and 1973, oil revenues began to increase rapidly and the period of permanent boom began. With increasing oil revenues and the absence of a system of democratic constraint the Shah began to reconstruct his despotism in line with aspirations of certain social classes, groups and communities. This succeeded in giving them, at least in principle, a degree of autonomy from the state, provided they did not attempt to challenge his monopoly of both absolute and arbitrary power.

The oil revenues and the emerging boom led to the expansion and formation of new state industries. An army of landless peasants provided the labour force for these State enterprises as well as for the burgeoning private industries appearing in urban areas. The Shah, by combining pseudo-modernising and pseudo-nationalist means, with the help of oil revenues, started to modernise the Iranian political economy. Iran now embarked on a course of investment in heavy industry that created a consumer boom through the importation of consumer durable and the latest sophisticated technology. Thus Iran appeared in the eyes of the world to be well on its way to becoming 'the Japan of the Middle East'. The Shah had also succeeded in building up the Iranian army, airforce and navy, as a means of safeguarding his own internal security and in order to police the Persian Gulf following the British withdrawal in 1968.

On January 21, 1965, the Prime Minister, Hassan Ali Mansur, was assassinated. Amir Abbass Hoveida replaced him as the new Prime Minister and remained in office for nearly thirteen years. His tenure in office coincided with the 1973 oil prices explosion, which were to have a disastrous effect on Iranian society. Katouzian suggests that Hoveida contributed to a worsening of the crisis by being weak-willed and misinforming his political master about the severity of the situation.⁴⁵

5.11 Conclusion

In this chapter we have traced the ups and downs of the political, social and economic tides in Iranian society over almost seventy years. These developments have consistently been connected with those occurring in wider international relations.

The demise of the Ottoman Empire, the two Russian Revolutions (1905-1917), the two great wars of 1914-18 and 1939-45, the Cold War epoch with its complicated actions and reactions as East and West figuratively threw stones at each other, brought important influences to bear on Iran. Above all, the importance of energy resources for the Western economy, has been the key factor in dramatically shaping the political, social and economic conditions of Iranian society.

It has been shown that the 1906 revolution and its associated nationalist aspirations prepared the ground for populist social and civic ambitions, further activated by the Russian revolution and the effects of the First World War. Consequent social and political anarchy seen as detrimental to Western interests were suppressed by implanting a nationalist centralised government motivated by modernist and progressive ambitions.

⁴⁵ H. Katouzian, *op. cit.*, p.241.

Except for brief periods after Reza Shah's departure in 1944, and during the premiership of Dr. Musaddiq in the early 1950s, successive Iranian governments have willingly, or through international circumstances, been forced to adopt policies which embraced such internal political, social and economic developments as were congruent with the designs of the world capitalist system. The external effects of international relations on Iran were manifested in a whole host of military, political, social and economic pressures. Iran had, perforce, to accommodate its internal and external policies to the overall strategies, expediencies and shifts of international power.

Although these strategies were tempered by a combination of security and economic considerations, the trend at the beginning of this century was more towards anxiety over internal security matters than economic interests. From the 1950s onwards, when international relations manifested themselves in the superpower rivalries, these relations became more economic-oriented in nature.

The various treaties between East and West defined the limits of their relations with one another in strategic and economic terms and the balance of power between the two blocs guaranteed the long-term duration of these relations. This meant that the occasional internally oriented policies of the Iranian government, which diverted from the political economy of the international capitalist system were never domestically secure, capable of being secured or guaranteed success.

The next chapter will deal with the social, political and economic developments occurring in Iraq since independence. The seventh chapter will then set out to analyse the political and economic developments that took place in both Iran and Iraq⁴⁶ during the 1970s, the time of their highest interdependence and engagement with the West and East.

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See Chapter VII, section C.

CHAPTER VI

IRAQ SINCE INDEPENDENCE

6.1 Introduction

British strategy in the nineteenth century with regard to the Middle East was based on support for the integrity of the Ottoman Empire as the means of keeping Russia at bay in the region and protecting the routes to India. This policy extended to the Suez Canal and Egypt as well as a desire to achieve naval hegemony in the Persian Gulf and influence in Arabia and Mesopotamia in order to secure and rethink new alternative routes to the Indian sub-continent.

The opening of the Suez Canal saw the expansion of Middle East regional trade with Europe and its supplanting of India as Britain's main trading partner. This state of affairs led the British to reconsider their overall strategy in the Middle East, a fact that was to have an enormous influence on the building of the post-war system in the region.

As noted by Hobsbawm, prior to the imperialist epoch, the overseas expansion of European capitalist powers into their periphery did not involve the formal annexation of territory "so long as their citizens were given total freedom to do what they wanted, including extra-territorial privileges".¹ Growing concentration and centralisation of capital in the 'core' gave rise to the contradictory dualism of increasing levels of finance capital coupled with increased protectionism. As Simon Bromley argued, "the new relations began to form as these economies sought out markets and raw materials".²

Large-scale German industrial development and their expansionist policies in the Middle East made necessary an imperial compromise between France, Russia and Britain, the crux of which hinged on the question of Anglo-German competition. When the new

¹ E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital, 1875-1914*, (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1975), p.160. Hobsbawm's observations have been shown in both chapters to be equally applicable to Iran.

² S. Bromley, *op. cit.*, p.70.

relations between the 'core' and the 'periphery' were established, attendant national rivalries were to underlay the processes of formal colonisation throughout the entire period from 1880-1914. The continental balance of power achieved by the Congress of Vienna in 1815 could no longer contain the European imperial rivalries that were to eventually to explode in the form of the First World War.

This chapter sets out to examine the turbulent political, social and economic environment in Iraq as well as the country's attempts at state-building and establishing institutions compatible with Western capitalism.

6.2 Iraq after the First World War

The entry of the Ottoman Empire into the war on the side of the central powers sealed its future fate. The war ruined the Ottoman economy and the human and financial cost of the military attrition severely weakened central power. As we have seen, the Russian challenge in the Middle East was a major threat to the British Empire. Conflict only served to heighten British fears so much so that the First World War was fought with the twin objectives of defeating Germany and preventing Russian expansion to the South. The Middle East therefore assumed an increased position of geo-political and military importance during the war.

At the beginning of the war the British authorities had no territorial designs on Ottoman lands. The War Minister, General Kitchener, argued that the Muslim Caliphate should be transferred to Arabia and from there it could be controlled by British naval power. In France, however, the presidency of Clemenceau had brought to power a less colonial minded government, whose sole concern was the defeat of Germany in Europe. The economic slump of 1920-21 along with the huge war expenditure, which had risen to £150,000,000,³ brought many critical pressures to bear on British society. These were a clear indication that unless a low-cost solution to the problems of imposing imperialist control could be found, then any British gain may be lost altogether.

³ Bromley, op.cit, p.75.

At the San Remo Conference in 1920 a final settlement was agreed between the allies where France would take Syria and Lebanon, and the British would control Iraq, Transjordan and Palestine. Iraqi oil would be shared amongst the powers.

The State Department in America began to actively seek to increase US interests in the Middle East. The US oil companies were at the vanguard of US penetration into the region.⁴ However, the US did not want to replace Anglo-French power or European hegemony over the area.⁵

At this stage Soviet Union anti-colonial movements added a further element of volatility to the developing situation. The Russian diplomatic offensive against Britain in Asia arose as a counter measure to the fact that the victorious allies had begun to support the anti-Bolshevik campaign, which was developing against the Soviet state.⁶ Russia's aggressive policy in the area resulted in the signing of treaties with Afghanistan and Iran and in the provision and declaration of support for Turkey. These diplomatic moves by the Soviets made the reimposition of European colonial forms of control much more difficult.

Iraq played an important rôle in Britain's strategy to link the eastern Mediterranean to the Gulf and hence to India. The geographical position of Iraq, as a main transport cross-route, its capacity for cotton crop production, its strategic importance for defending the Anglo-Iranian oil fields and the vital nature of its oil to naval power in the region, moved the cabinet secretary, Maurice Hankey, to remark that:

the retention of the oil-bearing regions of Mesopotamia and Persia in British hands, as well as a proper strategic boundary to cover them, would appear to be a first class British war aim.⁷

British government policy was concerned with the low-cost administration and control of Iraq and it was agreed that the cost of this undertaking should be borne by revenues arising from the rich oil-bearing region of Mosul. France and the US sanctioned

⁴ William Stivers, *Supremacy and Oil*, (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1982), p.110.

⁵ D. Fromkin, *A Peace to End all Peace*, (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1991), p.535.

⁶ E.H. Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917-1923*, Vol.3, (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1966), p.244.

⁷ S. Bromley, *op. cit.*, pp.78-9.

this arrangement in return for shares in the new oil concession. Thus began a new era and a new method of European control that would henceforth operate through the indirect rule of a mandate system. At the Cairo Conference in March 1921, it was agreed among the main participants to install Faisal as the head of an Arab government in Iraq. The conference also agreed that air power was to be deployed for the purpose of tribal pacification and that the subsidy paid to Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia was to be increased.

The British maintained an effective control over military, fiscal and judicial administration in Iraq. The Turkish Petroleum company, along with renewed US and French participation, was given permission to operate the Mosul and Basra oil-fields. This relieved British tax-payers of having to incur the expenses of new colonial undertakings. In October 1922 the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty replaced the League mandate but continued to guarantee British control over defence, finance and administration.

As noted before, the victorious European allies stumbled into creating a state system in the Middle East rather than as a result of any overarching system of belief or design. However, once the state building strategy had been fixed upon the various countries in the area, it was prosecuted with indecent haste and with little or no attention to the realities on the ground.

6.3 The 1921 Settlement - the basis for British influence in Iraq

The process of state building needed a strong and centralised government in Iraq. The 1921 settlement in preparing the modern techniques of administration, and handing it to the newly established monarchy in Iraq, facilitated the establishment of a system of central and authoritarian rule in Iraq.

After the 1858 Ottoman land reform law a process of large-scale state-formation in Iraq began. The tribal Sheikhs who had titular power became large landlords and began to displace tribal nomads. These moves were deeply unpopular and resulted in the predominantly Shi'ite and British supported tribal revolt of 1920-1. The Sunni-based support for Sharifian forces saw them installed in power under King Faisal's leadership. Indeed the Shi'ite tribesmen who had gone along with Sharifian agitation to expel the

British controlled administration and their system of state formation were mostly dominated by Sunni Arab nationalists. The consequence of the 1921 settlement has been summarised by Kedourie as follows:

The 1921 settlement left no machinery by which differences between ruler and subject, or between group and group could be composed with peace and moderation; it organised a central government, able to use all the modern techniques of administration, and handed it over to Faisal and Sharifian forces to use as they liked; authority was drained from all localities and communities to be concentrated in them; a group at odds with them would either be crushed wholly and finally or, if it could, would uphold its cause by the sword.⁸

In 1933, King Faisal himself recognised the problem of state-building and noted:

In Iraq there is still no Iraqi people, but unimaginable masses of human beings, devoid of any patriotic ideal, imbued with religious traditions and absurdities, connected by no common tie, giving ear to evil, prone to anarchy, and perpetually ready to rise against any government whatsoever.⁹

The Hashemite monarchy was supported by the Sunni and Shi'ite notables and Sunni bureaucrats of late nineteenth century Ottoman. The tribal sheikhs were an important source of support at provincial level. Commerce and banking, which were run by Jews, were taken over by Iranian and Kuwaiti families in the 1950s. Land ownership was extremely concentrated and the conditions of farmers were wretched. Under British rule and during the inter-war period the tribal leaders were converted into landowners becoming as a result the main pillars of local administration. As the result of the 1932 Land Law some 60% of total lands were owned by big landowners by 1958. As Haim Gerber noted; these landowners and the ruling élite of ex-Sharifian officers together formed a tangible landed upper-class that completely controlled Iraq, both socially and politically. This new centre of power replaced the private militias previously used by the tribal chiefs to control the peasantry.¹⁰

The Iraqi army for its part was composed of a mixture of ex-Ottoman and ex-Sharifian forces and was almost exclusively Sunni. During the 1930s the army succeeded in destroying tribal military power in all areas of the country except Kurdistan. However,

⁸ E. Kedourie, *England and the Middle East*, (Mansell Publishing, London, 1987), p.213.

⁹ M. Yapp, *The Near East Since First World War*, (Longman, London, 1991), p.70.

¹⁰ Haim Gerber, *The Social Origins of the Modern Middle East*, (Lynne Rienner, Colorado, 1987), p.91.

the continued tribal revolts and the inconclusiveness of military and political intervention from 1936-41, all pointed to the unconsolidated nature of the state in Iraq.

The Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1922, and the 1924 military agreement, had provided provisions for the appointment of internal judicial and financial advisors but had ensured British control over foreign and defence policies. In accordance with the terms of the later Treaty of 1930 Iraq joined the League of Nations in 1932. The new arrangements gave the British sovereign rights over two military bases; Habbaniyya near Baghdad and Sha'iba near Basra.

In 1941 a group of officers led a short-lived resistance movement against British interference in Iraqi affairs that resulted in Britain occupying the country until the end of the war. Between 1945 and 1958, Iraq was governed by a succession of twenty-four Cabinets, comprising of the same handful of individuals, often headed by the pro-British politician Nuri al-Said. During these thirteen years political parties were banned. Many Iraqis now began to believe that economic reform and freedom on the basis of a National Socialist state was the only way forward for their country.

A number of Arab secret societies had been founded before the First World War, with the objective of freeing the Arab World from Ottoman domination and setting up some form of Arab state, "perhaps with the assistance or even under the aegis of the European powers".¹¹ In the aftermath of the peace settlement in 1918-20, which failed to produce the independent state that many Arabs had wished or fought for, a new form of Arabism or Arab nationalism began to emerge. Almost all the main actors in the political Arab world subscribed to this new form of Arab nationalism, in its essentials at least, during the inter-war and immediate post-Second World War period.

In the particular case of Iraq, this Arab-nationalism,

was accompanied by the propaganda that twentieth century Iraqis were the direct descendants of the Mesopotamians, in an effort to promote feelings of loyalty to and pride in the new country.¹²

¹¹ Marian Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, *Iraq Since 1958*, (I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., London, 1990), p.16.

¹² *Ibid.*, p.170.

These twin streams of thought, Iraq-patriotism and Arab-nationalism, were filtered down to wide sections of the population and had an enormous effect on political thinking in the country. This factor was clearly evidenced in the fact that any new political party who wished to attract widespread support had to base its policies within this dual frame of reference. However, Iraq was a far from homogenous Arab state containing a number of different ethnic groups, most notably the Kurds in the north and the Shi'ites in the South, within its borders. This situation changed and Iraq began to take on the appearance, at least in theory, of an independent Arab state when "...Sharifian officers threw in their lot with Faisal and the Iraqi state after 1920".¹³ These actions served to make the country a more coherent inclusive entity than it had previously been under Ottoman rule. In reality though, the heterogeneous nature of the new state, with its large Shi'ite population and significant Kurdish minority, did not take easily to ideas such as Pan-Arabism or Iraqi nationalism. Nor did other social perspectives, like those of the Communist Party or the ideology of Jama'at al-Ahali, which was based on British Fabian belief, enjoy as much widespread popularity in Iraq during the inter-war period as they did, for example, in other Arab countries such as Syria. Indeed, the major social divisions within Iraq's geographical unity were to effect all aspects of official state policy implementation.

In April 1941 the British landed in the south of Iraq and within one had completely overrun and defeated the seriously out numbered and ill-equipped Iraqi forces.¹⁴ As Roger Louis rightly noted, "the year 1941 represented a watershed in the history of the British era in Iraq, and its significance is essential to understanding the nationalist rejection of the Treaty of Alliance with the British in 1948, and the end of the Hashemite dynasty ten years later".¹⁵

¹³ Ibid., p.17.

¹⁴ Valid Hamdi, *Iraq, Britain and the Axis Powers, A Political and Military Study of the 1941 Crisis*, Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 1985.

¹⁵ Roger Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East 1945-51: Arab Nationalism, the USA and Post-War Imperialism*, (Oxford University Press, London, 1984), p.313.

The return of the Regent to Baghdad and the premiership of Nuri that followed defeat by the British, 1941-45, offered the possibility of some form of stability returning to Iraq, even if this was to be achieved through the use of repression. The remaining seventeen years of monarchy were characterised by a high degree of unrest and uncertainty. This was partly due to the sudden shift of policies brought about by changes in the international situation, and partly due to the new strength and sense of purpose of the opposition forces acting within the country.

The German attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941, and the Soviet Union's subsequent joining of forces with the Allies introduced a brief period of increased political freedom in Iraq. The main beneficiaries in this new atmosphere, according to Marian Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett,¹⁶ were the political organisations of the left, including the social democratic forces associated with Jama'at al-Ahali, and the Iraqi Communist Party. In having a powerful and common enemy in the form of Germany, ideological differences were put aside for the time being and leftist aspirations came to be manifested in many different political organisations, most notably in the Iraqi ICP.

6.4 The Kurdish Question

The Kurds constitute 20% of the population of Iraq and the integration of the Kurdish area within Iraq has long been an important principle of Iraqi domestic policies. The boundary between Iran and the Ottoman Empire was charted in 1913 and this meant that until the end of the First World War the Kurds were, at least nominally, subject to the jurisdiction of either the Shah of Iran, or the Ottoman Sultan.

The Kurds are located in four countries (Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria) and have been used as a policy instrument in the pursuit of political objectives by Iran, the USA and Israel against Iraq, and by Iraq itself against Iran. The 'Kurdish Question' is second only to the Arab-Israeli question as the most important issue concerning the politics of the

¹⁶ Marian Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, *op. cit.*, p.22.

Middle East. The 'Kurdish Question' is vital to a full understanding of political and social developments in Iraq.

Historically, the Ottomans have always attempted to assert their absolute authority over the Kurds. This caused the 1837-52 and 1880-81 Kurdish uprisings, and even as late as the outbreak of the First World War Ottoman authority was being resisted and challenged by those living in what is now Eastern Turkey and Northern Iraq. Kurdish intellectuals, like their Arab counterparts, affected by the currents of nationalism appearing in Europe and Asia during the second part of the nineteenth century, began to establish political associations demanding either some form of decentralised administration or complete independence from Ottoman rule.

The Russian withdrawal from the war in December 1917 resulted in the creation a power vacuum in Eastern Turkey that was to last until 1919. This situation also created instability and uncertainty in Western Iran; until Reza Khan's seizure of power in 1921 restored order to the area. With the Ottoman defeat and the occupation of the Mosul province by the British forces, the Kurdish leaders pushed their claims further. They were encouraged by the promises of autonomy that seemed to be offered in President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points.

As a result of their occupation of Iraq the British had come to realise that the Mosul province was not capable of being administered in the same way as Baghdad and Basra. Therefore, they installed Shaikh Mahmood Barzani as the Governor of Sulaimaniya in November 1919. However, due to changing circumstances and his inability to adequately control the province he was soon removed from power.

By the early 1920s the Kurdish population had been divided between the States of Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey. Turkish policies towards the Kurds have been extremely harsh and repressive with the result that revolts by the Kurds against Turkish rule have been continuing from the 1920s to the present time. In Iran the revitalised army defeated the Kurds, in July 1922, dashing their hopes for autonomy or the establishment of an independent Kurdistan state.

In Iraq, the Kurdish situation was more complex. Shaikh Mahmood who was reinstated in Sulaimaniya, rejected any kind of Iraqi suzerainty. This had been promised to the Kurds by the British in 1922 and in response to Mahmood's declaration the British decided to occupy the region and began bombarding Sulaimaniya in December 1924. In early 1926 the League of Nations decided to send a Commission to the Mosul to decide whether it should be a part of Iraq or Turkey. In early 1926 the Iraqi Prime Minister declared a number measures that included allowing Kurdish language teaching in schools, recognising Arabic and Kurdish as the two official languages of the country, and establishing a Kurdish civil servant for Kurdistan, in an attempt to placate and pacify Kurdish separatist demands. These measures were only half-heartedly carried out, but nevertheless the overall situation of the Kurds in Iraq was not as repressive as in Turkey or Iran.¹⁷

When the League Mandate ended, the Kurds soon realised that there were no clauses in the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930 guaranteeing them minority rights status. In 1929 a number of Kurdish deputies protested to the Prime Minister that little had been done to implement the promises made in 1926. Shaikh Mahmood had been in exile since 1926 but on his return to the country in 1930 rioting erupted in Sulaimaniya. In the ensuing struggle for power he was decisively defeated and exiled once again to southern Iraq.

Almost concurrent with these events, the Barzani brothers started to organise revolts against the Iraqi government in the Barzan area. However, they were eventually forced to surrender and by 1936 were living under a form of house arrest in Sulaimaniya. Mulla Mustafa came into contact with Kurdish intellectuals and established the clandestine Hewa (Hope) Party in 1939.¹⁸ Hewa was a fairly loose grouping that included both left- and right-wing factions; that is, those who held that revolution and socialism were essential preconditions for the attainment of Kurdish national rights, and those who considered that the key to obtaining these rights lay in Britain's hands. The

¹⁷ Ibid., p.26.

¹⁸ Sa'ad Jawad, *Iraq and the Kurdish Question, 1958-1970*, (Ithaca Press, London, 1981), pp.13-14.

latter view implied that some sort of alliance or association with Britain was necessary for the attainment of Kurdish national aspirations, a view that Barzani himself was inclined to favour.¹⁹

In addition to Hewa, the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) had become active in Kurdistan almost immediately from the time of its foundation in 1934. It was the first political party to develop a coherent policy on the Kurdish question by introducing an autonomy plan based on self-determination.²⁰ Throughout the Second World War and in the years following the end of the conflict the party continued to have a wide following in Kurdish areas.

The British authorities, following their reoccupation of Iraq in 1941, continued to busy themselves with the southern parts of the country leaving the north more or less to its own devices.²¹ In July 1943, Mulla Mustafa escaped from Sulaimaniya and returned to Barzan to incite a revolt against the Iraqi government whilst at the same time seeking to enlist British support for Kurdish autonomy. The Iraqi government was infuriated, considering Kurdish autonomy to be a prelude to separatism and therefore a challenge to the sovereignty of the Iraqi State. In the summer of 1945 the Iraq government launched an effective campaign that succeeded in crushing the resistance. Mulla escaped to Iran and thereafter the Kurdish struggle was concentrated around a small town, Mahabad, in Iranian Kurdistan.

The Anglo-Soviet invasion of Iran in 1941 had resulted in Iranian authority over Kurdistan collapsing, a situation that elevated Mahabad to the centre of the movement for Kurdish autonomy. In October 1944, Gadhi Muhammed, a leading citizen and judge in Mahabad, joined the movement and in the autumn of 1945 he and his associates founded the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP). On 22 January 1946, Gadhi Muhammed decided to proclaim an autonomous Republic of Mahabad.

¹⁹ Marian Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, *op. cit.*, p.27.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.27.

²¹ S.H. Langrigg, *Iraq 1900 to 1950*, (Oxford University Press, London, 1953).

With the beginning of the Cold War, Britain and the United States were calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Iran. The Iranian government regained its authority and control in the country and Gadhi Muhammed and his colleagues were forced to surrender to the Iranian army on the 16th of December. In March 1947, the Iranian army launched a major offensive against Barzani and his men, forcing him back across the border into Iraq. On the 31st of March Gadhi Muhammed was captured and hanged by the Iranians despite superficial British attempts at mediation. Barzani decided to cross the Turkish and Iranian borders and move his force of some 600 men to the relative safety of the Soviet Union where they remained there until 1958. As Marian Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett noted, the Mahabad Republic still seemed the most viable vehicle for Kurdish national aspirations. However, the competing power bases that had arisen from the establishment of the Iraqi KDP by Homa Abdullah in 1946, the leadership of Barzani and the foundation of a number of other minor parties, resulted in the creation of a permanent political divide between Iraqi and Iranian Kurdistan.

6.5 The Socio-economic Situation Before the 1958 Revolution

After the demise of the Ottoman in 1920, the British adopted a series of policies that set out to reinforce their authority in Iraq during the mandate and monarchy periods. Therefore, supporting selected sheikhs and large land ownership became their priority in consolidating their power bases from which to influence the political, social and economic developments in the country. The consequences of these policies, which were economically and socially disastrous, combined with the lack of a national unity in Iraq, prepared the ground for the 1958 Revolution.

From the beginning of the British occupation the policies of the authorities were concerned with issues of security and the loyalty or neutrality of the local populations. The British decided to support the traditional authority of those tribes and landlords whose domains lay along the lines of their army's advance. This policy combined with the security of tenure that they had received from the Ottoman over the lands that they had

been unable to claim as their own formed the basis of their overall control strategy. A report of 1917 states:

Settled agriculture and extended civilisation have tended to disintegrate the tribe and to weaken the influence of the Shaikhs. To restore and continue the power of the tribal shaikhs is not the least interesting of the problems in land administration, which the Baghdad province presents.²²

In another report, the Revenue Commissioner noted in 1919:

We must recognise that it is primarily our business not to give rights to those who have them not, but to secure their rights to those who have them.²³

Therefore, the policy of bolstering the powers of selected shaikhs and landlords continued throughout the Mandate and monarchy periods with large land ownership forming the social base of the regime's authority.

In 1913, the total cropped area in the country amounted to 937,000 acres, by 1943 this figure had increased nearly fivefold.²⁴ However, the intensive use of pumps by unprofessional users, farmers not familiar with sophisticated agricultural techniques, and landowners concerned with immediate returns rather than long-term investment, led to a general deterioration in the quality of the soil. As a result, many landowners abandoned the land and shifted cultivation elsewhere.

A further problem arose from the fact the profits from agriculture were retained in the pockets of the big landlords, who were living in the cities, rather than being invested in the development of the industry.²⁵ The *fallahin* were the ones who suffered most from the enhanced socio-economic role and dominance of these new landlords. In 1953, a British expert described the Iraqi fallah as a "living pathological specimen", and estimated their average life expectancy to be between thirty-five and thirty-nine years.²⁶ The British land policies eventually drove the majority of the fallahin into debt without any incentive

²² Administrative Reports Revenue Board, Baghdad, for the period 22 March to 31 December 1918, F.O. 371/3406/139231.

²³ Lt. Col. E.B. Howell, Note on Land Policy, Baghdad, 1919, F.O. 371/4150/127807.

²⁴ Doreen Warriner, *Land and Poverty in the Middle East*, (Oxford University Press, London, 1949), p.99.

²⁵ Ahmad Fahmi, *Taqrir Hawl al-Iraq*, (Matba al-Adib al-Arabi, Baghdad, 1926), p.103.

²⁶ Professor M. Critchley, quoted in Rony Gabbay, *Communism and Agrarian Reform in Iraq*, (Croom Helm, London, 1978), p.29.

to produce more, since the best part of any increased yield would go straight to the landowners.

At the end of the 1920s, the migration of farmers from the land began and was to continue throughout the period of monarchical rule. The law governing the rights and duties of cultivators and defined the legal responsibilities of landlords, sarkals (the immediate superior), and fallahin, did little to encourage farmers' to increase their productivity, and the flight from the land continued unabated. A combination of the prevailing production relationship in the countryside and the attendant social and economic conditions, encouraged peasants to seek work in towns, where under the new economic developments arising from the increase in oil revenues during the 1950s, their labour was very much in demand. In 1956, in the vicinity of Baghdad, 92,000 of these farmers were living in 'shacks' made from palm branches. Most of these migrants came from those areas in which the concentration of landholding was highest and peasant oppression most acute.²⁷

Marian Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, noted,

While large landownership came to furnish the social base for the Monarchy and for the continuation of British influence, the socio-economic structures that emerged in the rural areas had the effect of arresting and distorting the historical processes of change within this sector of the economy. This resulted in uneven development of the Iraqi economy and the perpetuation of pre-capitalist relations of production in the countryside.²⁸

Thus Iraq became integrated into the international economic system as a primary exporter of grain, before switching to oil in the 1930s. By 1953 oil revenues accounted for 49.3% of national income and since 1934 Iraq had been dependent on oil to balance its budget.²⁹ However, the government's scant control over oil production and its price, and the fact that the Iraqi Dinar was linked to Sterling, meant that the economy was always affected by changes in the value of the British pound. The Iraqi economy was typical of a colonised or semi-colonial third world country in that most employment was in the

²⁷ Doris G. Phillips, 'Rural Migration in Iraq', *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 7, (1959), p.409, and M.M. Azeeze, *Geographical Aspects of Rural Migration from Amara Province, Iraq, 1955-1964*, Durham University Ph.D. thesis.

²⁸ Marian Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, op. cit., p.34.

²⁹ Peter Sluglett, *Britain in Iraq, 1914-1932*, (Ithaca Press, London, 1976), pp.198-199.

agriculture industry but that sector only accounted for 29% of national income. Industry was very underdeveloped, contributing only 8% to 10% of the growth of national income.

Under these circumstances, the position of the national bourgeoisie was extremely precarious, both economically and politically. However, no bourgeois political party could gather mass support, or promote its own ideology as that of the nation as a whole. The nation's economic development had become linked with demands for social justice, equality and socialism, which left little scope for the emergence of traditional bourgeois political values. Hence, despite the heterogeneity of the social structure and the absence of a single dominant class, there was a general consensus of opinion in the last decade of the monarchy that the country's most urgent needs were for national independence and economic development, both of which were being blocked or denied by the *ancien régime*.³⁰

The presence of the allied armies of occupation and their substantial purchasing power, gave the local firms and industries an obvious incentive to expand or initiate production. This encouraged capital accumulation on a larger scale than had ever been undertaken before in the country. The increasing Baghdad population and the concomitant growth of the labour force, coupled with the new political circumstances, created conditions that favoured the development of a labour movement in different sections of the economy and oil production.

The licensing of a number of political parties in 1946 was an important development in consolidating opposition to Britain and the monarchy. In July 1946, when the petroleum workers in Kirkuk were listening to a report from their strike committee, armed police suddenly invaded the meeting and ten people were killed.³¹ This tragic event was the prelude to the terrible violence of 1948, the year of the great national uprising known as *al-wathba*, the leap. The immediate cause of the violence arose from

³⁰ Ibid., p.37.

³¹ Su-ad Khairi, *Min Ta'rikh al-Thawriyya al-Mu'asira fil-Iraq*, (*The History of the Contemporary Revolutionary Movement in Iraq*), (Matba' al-Adib al-Arabi, Baghdad, 1975), pp.150-152.

the terms of the Portsmouth Agreement between Britain and Iraq, which if implemented would have had the effect of prolonging the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1918 for a further twenty years.

Although some British officials had come to realise that, "with the old gang in power this country cannot hope to progress very far", their anxieties were temporarily allayed when Iraq's first Shi'i Prime Minister, Salih Jabr, took office after the elections of March 1947.³² The ensuing political upheavals resulted in the banning of moderate leftist political parties and death sentences for communist party leaders along with two of the party's members. This coincided with an unprecedented rise in the cost of living that further increased public hostility towards the British in the region.³³

On the 20th of January, a number of people were killed in a series of disturbances and protests forcing the Regent to announce that he would not ratify the Treaty. Six days later Jabr returned from London and on the 27th, three to four hundred people were killed by the police and armed forces in huge demonstrations throughout the country.

The last ten years of the monarchy saw some twenty Cabinets come in and out of office. This period represented the peak of Nuri's personal control and influence as evidenced by the fact that when he and his associates were not actually in power, it was a matter of months before they had to be called back into office. Meanwhile, oil revenues were beginning to grow rapidly, and despite the existence of much corruption and venality within government circles, by the start of the 1950s there was a certain optimism in evidence regarding the country's future prospects. Nuri for his part began to explore the possibility of establishing a system of governance that would simultaneously protect British interests and ensure the survival and consolidation of the present regime's rule.

³² Chancery, Baghdad, to Eastern Department, Foreign Office, 16 July 1946, F.O. 371/52315/E7045.

³³ Baghdad, F.O. 371/68446/E2217.

Table 8
Oil Production and Revenues, 1946-58

Year	Million Tons	Revenues (I.D. Million)
1946	4.6	2.3
1948	3.4	2.0
1950	6.5	5.3
1951	8.6	13.3
1953	28.0	49.9
1955	33.0	84.4
1958	35.8	79.9

Source: Y. Sayigh, *The Economics of the Arab World: Development Since 1945*, p.37.

6.6 The new horizon: the Revolution of 14 July 1958

This Revolution was a response to the feelings of discontent that had been growing for some time among many sections of the population in Iraq. This discontent was fuelled by the inadequate reforms undertaken during the mandate and monarchy periods. The revolution brought hope to ordinary people and intellectuals alike, being seen as Iraq's victory against foreign powers that now placed the internal developments and future of the country in its own hands.

The activities of the Development Board, which was established in 1950, were not adequate to stem the growing tide of discontent. The Board concentrated mainly on large-scale projects that failed to produce immediate, tangible results, and the rich pickings of the long-term undertakings went solely to those fortunate enough to be awarded the contracts.³⁴

The international events of the 1950s: Iranian oil nationalisation in 1951; the Baghdad Pact in 1955; Abdul Nasser's rise to power in Egypt in 1956, and his successful defiance of Britain, France and Israel in 1956, influenced and inspired the leaders of political parties in Iraq. The Communist Party was particularly enthused by these events and began to reorganise under new leadership in the early 1950s. It organised a series of

³⁴ Roger, Wm., Louis, op. cit., p.593.

huge demonstrations in Baghdad in 1953, which resulted in eighteen people being killed by the armed forces, the imposition of martial law and the arrest of its party leaders.

To maintain his power base, the Regent planned to hold a relatively free election in June 1954 as well as deciding to bring Nuri al-Said back to negotiate with the British on the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930, which was due to expire. On his return Nuri al-Said prorogued the parliament and, on the formation of what was to be the twelfth of his fourteen cabinets, he began to rule by decree with the aid of a totally servile parliament.

The response to economic and social problems besetting the country was less well-organised and co-ordinated than it had been during the 1940s. The Suez Crisis and Abdul Nasser's strong reaction to the Western-sponsored defence agreements in the Middle East were crucial factors influencing affairs in Iraq. Pan-Arabism now began to exert a dominant influence on the policies of Nuri's government. Although the second national opposition front was formed in 1957, they were powerless to bring any effective opposition to bear against the government, which employed all available methods of coercion. A group known as the Free Officers - a secret organisation within the military establishment - responded to the problem by undertaking a coup that transformed into the Revolution of 14 July 1958.

6.7 The 1958 Revolution

The Revolution of 14 July 1958 brought hope for the poor, the urban dwellers and the masses of unemployed people, and was almost universally accepted among the Iraqi people. For the majority of the population the revolution was seen to have ushered a new government to power that would not only free the country from the tutelage of Britain and her clients, but would pursue policies directed towards the fulfilment of their country's interests. The Free Officers thought that if they could liberate their country, their ambitions for progress and freedom would eventually fall naturally into place.

The Baghdad Pact in 1955, and the tripartite invasion of Egypt in 1956, had served to attract more officers into the Free Movement, which had been secretly

established in 1932.³⁵ The final date for action was chosen by Col. Abd al-Salam Arif and Brig. Abd al-Karim Qasim, to coincide with the overland transfer of the 20th infantry brigade to Jordan.

On the 13th of July Arif, who was commanding one of the battalions of this brigade, managed to take control of the brigade and directed it to Baghdad. At 6.30 a.m. on July 14th, Arif read out the first proclamation of the new régime over Baghdad radio. Martial law was declared with Arif and Qasim appearing on television to call for the maintenance of order and unity.

In the afternoon the new Cabinet was announced, comprising of a mixture of officers, prominent politicians and representatives from a number of different political parties, except those belonging to the Communist Party and Kurdish Democratic Party. The Free Officers held the most important political posts and commanding posts in the armed forces.

The main institutions of the old régime were abolished and the federation between Iraq and Jordan was disbanded. Iraq no longer attended the Baghdad Pact meetings and the new regime began to pursue an independent foreign policy by established relations with China and other socialist countries. To avoid a major confrontation with the oil companies, the régime remained non-committal about its intentions towards them.

6.8 Political developments after the Revolution

Qasim's public appearances were greeted with enthusiasm but below the surface tensions and differences were beginning to emerge amongst the various elements in the new revolutionary government. Although Qasim and Arif were principally responsible for the coup neither was widely known at the time, and when differences between them emerged, there was considerable confusion about their respective rôles. However, polar political alliances gradually crystallised between the 'left wing' (Iraqi nationalist and

³⁵ H. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A study of Iraq's old landed and commercial classes and of its Communists, Ba'thists and Free Officers*, (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1978), pp.764-807.

Communist) and 'right wing' (Arab nationalist).³⁶ In common with other revolutions, it was widely believed by the people, and even euphorically announced by some of the revolutionary authorities themselves, that the major social evils and injustice besetting the country would now be easily and quickly eradicated within a short period of time. In reality however, most Free Officer members and their civilian counterparts in government were taking a more cautious approach to events.

The growing rift between Arif and Qasim and their struggle for supreme power were openly manifested in the dilemma over whether or not Iraq should join Egypt and Syria in the United Arab Republic. Due to the restricted nature of political activities during the monarchist régime, in which the political parties were never able to test or widen their influence in properly-held election, opposition had been effectively forced underground. Therefore the nationalist and other political parties who had assumed power were relative new-comers to the political scene. The Communist Party on the other hand, benefiting from the experiences of the world Communist movement, was a more organised and experienced political entity. It controlled most of the trade unions and had been organising effective opposition by directing and channelling the emotions of the crowds in the streets of Baghdad, on whom the new government so vitally depended.

Under such circumstances, Qasim found himself in a highly anomalous position. His own political views were reformist rather than revolutionary and much more in line with the patriotism of the KDP than the ideological pursuits of the Communists. The priority for Qasim was the protection of domestic industry and agriculture, and the creation of a welfare state.³⁷

The sudden rise in oil revenues in the early 1950s, which widened the gap between the very rich and the rest of society, underlined the pressing need for major social reforms. The Communist Party, in the absence of an effective bourgeois social democratic party, was increasingly regarded as the only organisation capable of voicing

³⁶ Marian Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, *op. cit.*, p.51.
³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.54.

the people's aspirations as it stressed the need for democratic reforms as well as revolutionary change.

Qasim, unlike Abd al-Salam Arif at the time and Saddam Hussein a few years later, lacked the ability to create his own regional networks of support in those areas in which Communism had failed to take root.³⁸ He found himself almost entirely dependent on the support of the masses who themselves were more sympathetic to the aims and ideals of the Communist Party. Despite his deep reservations Qasim had literally no choice but to come to some sort of accommodation with the Communists.³⁹

6.9 Political polarisation

At the end of July 1958, Michel Aflaq, the secretary-general and co-founder of the Ba'th Party, arrived in Baghdad from Damascus in an effort to convince the new government to join the UAR. The immense impact and influence of Nasser in the Arab world and his nationalisation of the Suez Canal in 1956, had attracted many of the Ba'th and nationalists to unity within the UAR.

In the pre-independence period, there had been little hostility between the Communist parties of the Middle East and Arab nationalist organisations, since both were united in their opposition to the British and French colonial presence. Furthermore, the Iraq Communist Party (ICP) had succeeded in bridging the ideological gap between the two movements by merging the notion of "class struggle", with that of national independence.

In 1958, the Party adopted the slogan of 'Towards a National Arab Policy', declaring that the Arabs are one nation and as such have a fervent desire for unity. They saw the fulfilment of the Pan-Arab idea as being tied to the disappearance of imperialism from the Arab World and the introduction of democratic reforms.⁴⁰ These Communist

³⁸ Phoebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, (Boulder, Westview, 1985), p.166.

³⁹ Marian Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, op. cit., p.55.

⁴⁰ Henri Grimal, *Decolonisation: The British, French, Dutch and Belgian Empires, 1919-1963*, trs., S. de Vos, (Boulder, Col., Westview, 1978). Also: Batatu, op. cit., p.750.

Party policies resulted in them being accepted as one of the main political parties in Iraq commanding widespread support.

The gradual entrenchment of the Qasim government had brought together a coalition of groups that included the nationalists, Nasserists and the Ba'th, began an extensive propaganda campaign accusing Qasim of being a Communist puppet. These groups, assisted materially and morally by Nasser and his supporters in Syria, gradually developed into the main Communist opposition force in the country.

The actual experience of the practical workings of the UAR was to prove to be an unhappy affair. An internal Ba'th party document from 1956 had emphasised the fundamental incompatibility between Communist internationalism and the Ba'th's own union policy, which itself was under threat from the different warring factions that were emerging from within the party. Inevitably all these factors combined and resulted in the failure to inspire or convince the Communist Party to join the Union. In a huge demonstration organised in Baghdad the Party called for "Federal Union and Soviet Friendship", instead of a constitutional union. This opposition to union was also congenial to Qasim for two reasons: first, along with many non-Communist Iraqis, he was much more of an Iraqi patriot than a Pan-Arab nationalist; and secondly, he had no particular desire to play second fiddle to Nasser.⁴¹

For most of the political leaders who called for immediate union, Pan-Arabism and "Wahda" were primarily used as tactical notions with which to discredit the Communists by representing them as traitors to the Arab nation. However, it was the questions of land reform and the nationalisation of oil and industry that formed the main issues dividing the population. It was the religious conservatives along with other influential sections of society who were the ones becoming increasingly fearful of what they imagined to be the threat from the left.

⁴¹ Penrose, E. and Penrose, E.F., *Iraq: International Relations and National Development*, (Benn, London, 1978). Also: Uriel Dann, *Iraq under Qasim, a Political History*, (Pall Mall, London, 1969).

Thus an alliance was formed between these forces threatened by Qasim's régime and those who believed, or professed to believe, that the Communists were simply awaiting an opportunity to take over. The vested interests of those groups that had not been destroyed in the July 1958 revolution, gradually came to seek common ground and join in a union with the Ba'thists and Pan-Arab nationalists in their opposition to Qasim and the Communists.

A few days after the revolution Arif, as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, paid a visit to Damascus where he met and held discussions with Nasser. Such was the impression that Nasser made on Arifi that the latter began to enthusiastically support Michel Aflaq's⁴² proposal for merging Iraq into the UAR. However, Qasim was not happy with his deputy's public assertions, considering them at best, ill-advised, and at worst, simply disloyal.

Arif continued to proclaim his support for unity in an attempt to promote nationalist support for his own leadership designs. Eventually he was relieved of his political functions on the 30th of September before being appointed as the Ambassador to Bonn twelve days later. However, he soon left this post and returned secretly to Baghdad where he was arrested, tried on camera, and sentenced to death before being granted a reprieve in February 1959.

The bloody clashes between Qasim's supporters - now identified as "Communists" - and nationalist supporters spread to various parts of the country. Rashid Ali al-Gilani, who had returned to Baghdad in September, after seventeen years of exile, instigated an unsuccessful coup attempt against the government.

On the 21st of July 1958, a special court was set up to try the enemies of the people. At this stage, the front organisations of the Communist Party were gaining strength and popularity. This created a profound sense of alarm in the minds of those who had no Communist sympathies and who feared the emergence of a genuinely left-wing government. These various groups who feared, or were opposed to the

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There is a possibility that Arif and others invited Aflaq to participate in overthrowing Qasim.

Communists began to make preparations to combat the enormous rise in support for the Iraq Communist Party. The ICP began to moderate its demands in the wake of rising opposition and attempted to revive the pre-revolutionary Front of National Unity in November 1958. The bloody events of Mosul on 6 March 1959, which polarised the political forces in the country more sharply than ever, ended any possible future viability for the Front.

By the end of 1959, the idea of unity, "wahda", was no longer viewed as an achievable reality amongst the various political factions in Iraq. Since the ICP had the support of progressive opinion in most parts of the country, the nationalists and their associates relied for their support on anti-Communist or religious elements,⁴³ and those members of the armed forces who were unhappy with the Qasim régime. The nationalists and Ba'thists formed themselves into loosely coordinated underground groups and hit squads. The potent image of "the Communist enemy" also began to emerge and circulate during this period. By 1961 the Secretary General of ICP reported that 286 party members and sympathisers had been murdered by nationalist hit squads, and that thousands of families living in nationalist strongholds had been forced to leave their homes. The polarisation of the political parties was now so vast and tensions between them so intense that it became clear that something had to give.

Under the new circumstances and following the Mosul revolt, the ICP began demanding some form of parliamentary democracy, or at least party representation in government. Qasim refused these demands despite the reduced activities of the People's Resistance Forces and the retiring of ICP army officers. However, on 13-14 July 1959, Qasim announced the appointment of a Communist Party member and two of the Party's associates to the cabinet. The following year, on 6th January 1960, the government went further in its concessions by legalising the party. However, these moves did not change the fundamental structure of power within the state, which in real terms was still tilted increasingly against the Communists.

⁴³ Uriel Dann, *op. cit.*, pp.134-135.

In July 1959, apparently on the route of the procession celebrating the first anniversary of the Revolution, fighting between rival groups of Kurds and Turkamans broke-out with many people being killed. This massacre, although in no way planned by the ICP,⁴⁴ was eagerly seized upon by its opponents, particularly Qasim, as an opportunity to distance themselves from the Communists. These events were followed by a wave of arrests of ICP members all over the country, restrictions being placed on the activities of the Party and the purging of the army of all those suspected of being communists or communist sympathisers.

In the aftermath of Kirkuk, the political situation had profoundly changed in the country with the nationalist and anti-Qasim camps gaining ground rapidly. On the 7th of October, the Ba'thists made an unsuccessful attempt on Qasim's life. The massive demonstrations of support that he received following the failed assassination attempt made him underestimate the real vulnerability of his position and overestimate his ability to act as an arbitrator between opposing political forces.⁴⁵ Although he continued to pursue a conciliatory policy towards the nationalists and to reinstate many of them into the armed forces and the civil service, it was too little too late and much blood was spilled.⁴⁶ His attempts to achieve conciliation with the moderate forces by clamping down on the Communists merely served to undermine his only secure source of support.

By the end of 1960, the hope of establishing a democratic constitution had passed and as Uriel Dann noted, "conventional political life had virtually ceased and the thirty months of stagnation that followed were filled with a terrible sense of foreboding, a sense of waiting for what many knew would be the fatal blow to all."⁴⁷

In February 1963, when two thirds of the army were engaged in operations in Kurdistan, the oppositional conspirators, (a group of Ba'thist and nationalist officers the most prominent of whom was Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr) decided to seize their opportunity.

⁴⁴ Marian Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, *op. cit.*, p.21.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.74.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.74.

⁴⁷ Uriel Dann, *op. cit.* p.269.

In the early morning of the 8th February of 1963 the conspirators began to broadcast their demands over the radio. There were immediate demonstrations in support of Qasim and his regime all over Baghdad. Twenty-four hours later the Ministry of Defence, where Qasim was holding out, fell to the rebels and following a summary "trial" and execution of Qasim and his colleagues, the first chapter of the 14th July Revolution was closed.

6.10 Economic and social policies, 1958-1963

The economic and social policies promoted by Qasim were genuine attempts to improve the condition of the country and he was considered a man of principle by wide sections of the population. His government devoted considerable resources to the educational system and health care, as well as enacting progressive labour legislation. A land reform programme introduced in October 1958, imposed ceilings on individual holdings and new co-operatives and contracts beneficial to the peasants were set up thus reducing the political power of the landlords.

Another popular measure with which Qasim was associated was the construction of low-cost housing complexes for the poverty-stricken slum dwellers living on the outskirts of Baghdad. The establishment of housing associations and the provision of low cost interest loans for the better-off and government employees enabled them to buy their own houses on very favourable terms.⁴⁸

Parallel with the economic policies of the political parties of Iraq, the government set up many economic committees and departments to cover all aspects of economic planning. The "Provincial Economic Plan" (1959/60 - 1962/63), and the "Detailed Economic Plan" (1961/62 - 1965/66), were adopted to target industrialisation as the country's major priority. According to Law 80, passed in 1961, the unexploited areas of the Iraq Petroleum Company's concession were to be repossessed by the government. Mindful of Muhammed Musaddiq's experience in Iran a few years earlier, Qasim

⁴⁸ L.N. Rauf, *Development and Housing in Iraq*, Sussex University Ph.D. 1981, especially pp.330-78.

hastened to assure the companies immediately following the Revolution that all existing agreements dated from 1952 would continue to be honoured.⁴⁹

Oil production rose steadily between 1958 and 1963 from 731.3 mbd. to 1161.9 mbd., with negotiations over the price of oil and unexplored areas of the concession taking place between the government and the company from August 1960 to October 1961. The unsuccessful conclusion of these negotiations led to the passing of Law 80, against which the companies retaliated by reducing their levels of oil production.

6.11 Ba'th power: Abd al-Salam and Abd al-Rahman Arif

Having executed Qasim, the Ba'th set about eliminating the rest of their opponents. Although the Communist Party leadership had been aware for some time that a coup was imminent, it had not made any detailed contingency plans. The National Guard, under the leadership and control of the Ba'th Secretary General, began rounding up known communists or shooting them in the streets.

According to Batatu, the scale of the killings and arrests that took place in the spring and summer of 1963 clearly indicates the existence of a pre-planned, closely co-ordinated and highly organised campaign by the Ba'ath's. It is almost certain that those who carried out the raids on suspects' homes were working from lists supplied to them. Precisely how these lists had been compiled is a matter of conjecture, but it is certain that some of the Ba'th leaders were in touch with American intelligence networks. It is also undeniable that a variety of different interest groups in Iraq, and indeed elsewhere in the Middle East, had a vested interest in breaking what was probably the strongest and most popular Communist Party in the region.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Penrose and Penrose, op. cit., p.275.

⁵⁰ Batatu, op. cit., pp.985-86. Batatu quotes King Hussein as saying "what happened in Iraq on 8 February had the support of American intelligence, and a high ranking former official of the State Department has confirmed to us that Saddam Hussein and other Ba'thists had made contact with the American authorities in the late 1950s and early 1960s, at this stage, the Ba'th were thought to be the political force of the future, and deserving of American support against Qasim and the Communists."

By November Arif and his allies (including his brother Brig. Abd al-Rahman Arif) had seized power and proceeded to establish a political system where all thoughts of democracy were soon crushed. The new political system had no legitimacy except for that conferred upon it by military force and the means of coercion.⁵¹

In his bid to retain power and consolidate his position, Arif moved to force out the remaining right wing Ba'thist elements from the party, (most notably the Vice-President, Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr) and proceeded to develop a loyal élite corps in the army by putting his own friends and relatives in key positions.

Although most members of the régime were nationalists or Nasserists of some kind, personal and ideological differences persisted, and Iraq-Egypt relations continued to progress in a state of suspicion and uncertainty. Despite the fact that in 1964 and 1965 a number of unity projects were launched between the two nations, Arif began to abandon his earlier enthusiasm for immediate union with Egypt. The 1964 and 1965 unity projects merely served as useful ammunition for Arif in proving his continued enthusiasm for Arabism in the eyes of the larger Arab world.

The continuation of political instability in the country had created a general crisis in business confidence and instigated capital transfers abroad.⁵² This propelled the government to adopt measures to stop the outward flow of capital and to satisfy aspirations calling for increased state participation in the economy. Towards this end, and only two months after issuing a provisional constitution that stressed the inviolability of private property, all banks, insurance companies as well as thirty-two large industrial and commercial firms were nationalised. These measures were taken to coincide with the sixth anniversary of the Revolution but served only to heighten the economic crisis. The lack of qualified personnel and the absence of any real enthusiasm or commitment on the part of the government to implement these measures contributed further to the general malaise in the economic system.

⁵¹

Ibid., p.995.

⁵²

Penrose, E and F. Penrose, op. cit., pp.318-21.

The government's economic policies became the subject of major disagreement between the various factions in government, especially after the disclosure of the negotiations with the IPC, which had been taking place between May 1964 and June 1965, were revealed. When news of the agreement, which reinstated the unexplored areas to IPC control, leaked out, six Nasserist ministers resigned in protest and the furore that ensued meant that the agreement was never ratified.

Arif immediately replaced Tahir Yaha with al-Razzaz as the Prime Minister. However, whilst Arif was attending a summit meeting in Casablanca, al-Razzaz made an unsuccessful attempt to seize power, which resulted in his having to flee the country to Cairo. Nasser for his part had disassociated himself from the attempted coup and continued to recognise Arif as the leader of Iraq. A new Prime Minister, Dr. Abd al-Rahman al-Bazzaz, was appointed in the wake of al-Razzaz's flight, but his cabinet proved to be limited and ineffectual as they were totally reliant on Arif for their continuation in office.⁵³

Al-Bazzaz introduced a more liberal economic policy to regain the confidence of the industrial and commercial communities but his position was weakened when Arif died in a helicopter accident in April 1966. However, he did manage to secure the smooth transition of power to Arif's brother, Abd al-Rahman Arif, but more pressing problems were to soon follow. The factionalism and rivalry between the officers that Abd al-Salam had been able to contain or balance now gradually began to surface once again. They particularly resented the fact that al-Bazzaz had begun to ask questions about military expenditure and that he was pursuing a constructive policy in Kurdistan. Such was the pressure exerted on al-Bazzaz that he was eventually forced to resign.

The next two years were to see a succession of military governments assume the reigns of power. At the end of 1966, because of a dispute between the IPC and the Syrian government over the cost of oil transit fees, the Iraqi oil revenues were reduced to one-third of their former level. In spite of hints from the Syrians that their attitude might

⁵³ Penrose and Penrose, *op. cit.*, pp.333-52.

change dramatically if Iraq decided to nationalise its oil, Naji Tabib's government chose the line of *realpolitik*, on the grounds that the time was not right to undertake such a massive step. The pumping of oil was resumed in March 1967, but this episode highlighted Iraq's dependence on the IPC.

When the inter-factional quarrels about government failure to seriously to participate in the Arab-Israeli war of June 1967, surfaced, Arif had to take the matter in hand himself and promptly assumed the premiership. After the war, Tahir Yahya was appointed Prime Minister and he immediately proceeded to break off diplomatic relationships with Britain and the USA, and embark on a more independent oil policy. Laws Nos.97 and 123 paved the way for the government to play a more active part in the development of the country's resources. The Government signed a service contract with the French Consortium, ERAP, and at the same time came to agreements with Russia for the development of North Rumaila and a number of other oilfields. These developments were a prelude to the Ba'th government's nationalisation of the IPC in 1972.

Broadly speaking, the post-revolutionary governments in Iraq claimed to be committed to state-sponsored economic development, which they called the Arab model of socialism. However, the political confusion and unrest that occurred during the years between Qasim's overthrow and the assumption of power by the Ba'th in July 1968, interrupted the implementation of these economic policies. For example, 1965-69 plan, which aimed to establish a dynamic industrial sector, succeeded in achieving only 40% of its full-intended target.

Land reform continued to proceed slowly and was hindered by the scarcity of trained and committed personnel available to implement the desired improvements. This caused acute dislocations in agriculture, and although the living standards and working conditions in the countryside undoubtedly improved, overall food production began to decline to a level from which it has never fully recovered.⁵⁴

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Marian Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, op. cit., p.102.

6.12 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to highlight the seminal events that have occurred in Iraq since independence. Cumulatively and interplatedly these events (1921 settlement, the Kurdish question, the Free Officers and the 1958 Revolution, intra-regime conflict, and the manipulation of the Kurds in pursuit of external interests) demonstrate the severe problems facing Iraq in its attempts to become a stable, independent and modern state.

The death of Abd al-Salam Arif, the most senior Free Officer after Qasim and the country's leading advocate of Arab socialism and Arab unity, created a vacuum that lasted until the Ba'th take-over of power in 1968. This vacuum was evidenced in the lack of strong coherent leadership and the absence of any discernible or beneficial economic policies.⁵⁵

The failure to participate effectively in the Arab-Israeli war of June 1967, the continuing conflict in Kurdistan, the vacillation and evasion shown toward the IPC, the growing loss of confidence in the government on the part of the majority of the population, all arose as a result of the inability to adequately fill this power vacuum.

In this uncertainty any well-organised political party or group with access to officers occupying key positions in the armed forces stood a good chance of being able to take over the government. This makes it possible to argue that the Ba'th Party, with its highly structured organisation, was therefore destined to govern Iraq.

Chapter Seven sets out to examine the Ba'th Party in power and the political, social and economic policies they pursued from the late 1960s through the 1970s.

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Middle East Record, 1967, Vol.III, pp.360-361.

CHAPTER VII

POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN IRAN AND IRAQ IN THE 1970s

7.1 Introduction

The First World War and its aftermath – notably the demise of the Ottoman Empire – established a new political configuration in the Middle East that was harmonious with the old capitalist system of Europe. Britain and France were the main beneficiaries of the changed system and were soon joined by the United States of America as the events of the Second World War propelled that country more actively into the international arena.

Confrontation between the rival 'East' and 'West' blocs was also emerging at this time, under the leadership of the United States and the Soviet Union. The importance of energy resources for industrial societies and the competitive interests that arose in pursuing them created an environment of unease and tension in international relations. The number of treaties between the Eastern and Western block defining the spheres of influence on each side were symptomatic of that tension and helped at least to avoid a head-on confrontation between powers with horrifying nuclear capabilities.

The increased energy requirements of the West, prompted by the post-war economic booms of the 1950s and 1960s, highlighted the importance of the Middle East for the outside world. The Western industrial nations were clearly heavily dependent on these oil resources, so much so that the geo-politics of oil was to become the salient feature of post-war international relations.

The nationalist aspirations surfacing in the Middle East after the Second World War led to calls for oil nationalisation. Iran became the first country to follow this route

by nationalising the industry in 1951. The activities and decisions of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) were also becoming increasingly obstructive to the Western energy policies in the oil markets. The effects of these policies on the international oil market can be clearly seen in the oil crises of the early 1970s, which ushered in a new era of discontent and economic dislocation for Western powers.

In 1973 an oil embargo was placed on the Western economies that was to alter the political and economic status of the Middle East forever. The region was now demonstrating a collective capacity to affect, if not determine, the flow of oil into the international market.

The 1975 Algiers Agreement between Iran and Iraq was initially received positively in the West as its terms reduced the risk of direct confrontation with the USSR in such a sensitive region. However, this support did not last for long as political and economic events in the region and on the international scene began to change and once again expose the West's true strategical interests in the region.

Furthermore, the accumulation of the 'petro-dollars' earned by oil producing countries - \$500 billion between 1974-78 - was becoming a matter of concern for the world financial system.¹ A flood of credit became available in a world desperate for development finance - eventually fuelling a crisis of third world indebtedness.

The old Western strategy based on the regional political arrangements of the late 1940s could no longer contain the massive economic and political changes taking place in the Middle East during the 1970s. These political changes (little expected among the powers) were eventually to culminate in the collapse of the Pahlavi régime in Iran and eight years of bloody war between the two main oil producing countries in the region, Iran and Iraq.

¹ Charles Issawi, *Ibid.*, p.207.

The war has inflicted \$644.3 and \$452.6 billion worth of physical damage to the economic infra-structures of Iran and Iraq respectively as well as having far reaching repercussions for their neighbouring countries.²

Since 1979 the oil producing countries have earned roughly \$2500 billion in the international oil market. These countries, their huge earnings notwithstanding, have recurrent budget deficits and huge debts with Western countries and world financial institutions.

This chapter examines the political and economic developments in Iran and Iraq in the late 1960s and early 1970s that have contributed to subsequent developments in their economic policies and political strategies – notably the Algiers' Agreement and OPEC decision making process. These were to have grave consequences on the regional balance of power, on the world economy as a whole, and particularly on the international capitalist system.

7.2 Iran

A. Economic developments and despotism

The growth of production and the later escalation of oil prices were to be the most important factors influencing life in Iran from 1964 onwards. The receipt of these huge revenues were crucial to the survival of Iran's despotic regime. Without them there were not sufficient funds to purchase the silence of various social groups and individuals, or to finance, as Katouzian puts it, 'the pseudo-modernist strategy of economic development'.³ The regime was also increasingly dependent on the West, especially America, because of its large military and financial requirements, and was

² Kamran Mofid, *The Economic Consequences of the Gulf War*, (Routledge, London, 1990), p.139.

³ H. Katouzian, op. cit., p.255.

consequently unable to establish friendly relations with the communist bloc countries particularly the Soviet Union and China.

The increase in oil revenues, which now saw them account for more than 10% of the national output, began to afford the state an unusual degree of economic and political independence from the oil productive forces and the demands of the powerful established social classes operating within the country. These social classes began to find themselves in the unusual position of now being more dependent on the state than ever for: employment and privileges; investment, booming domestic markets as sources for higher profits; trade and speculation; and on general welfare schemes such as education, health and food subsidies. In those oil-producing countries with a large agricultural community the oil revenues per head of population were still not enough to provide a reasonable standard of living for all. In these highly stratified societies it was inevitable that the state was selective in who it chose as the main recipients of the economic benefits. The state's clientele group came from a minority section of the urban population that included such groups as the military and bureaucratic complex, professionals, and the business class, all of which had become increasingly dependent on the state for a level of income compatible with their growing aspirations. Their situation and status also made them, perhaps, the single greatest potential challenge to the state monopoly of power.

The masses of the urban population, who were not part of the state's clientele, were nevertheless also increasingly reliant on the state for their basic needs such as employment, minimum wage guarantees, food subsidies and public health. This social grouping was perhaps the most volatile in that despite being located in the urban and most modern sector of the economy their high expectations were constantly frustrated, leading to anger, dissatisfaction and bitterness.

The last social category, the peasantry, were almost totally excluded from the benefits of the oil revenues. They were seen as too politically weak and disorganised to warrant any substantial threat to the regime. However, this group soon became disillusioned with rural life and began to migrate in large numbers towards the cities where they swelled the ranks of those urban masses whose aspirations and demands the state was finding increasingly difficult to contain.

The entire system, economic, social and political, depended for its stability on the size and strategy of state expenditure. State expenditure rapidly expanded the military-bureaucratic network, both in the size of its membership and its consumption of state resources. Bureaucratic earnings were a particularly heavy drain on state resources leading to a high level of personal consumption expenditure, most notably on high-quality imported food and modern durable goods, which in turn created foreign exchange problems.

As the oil revenues continued to rise, and despite the expanding consumption of foreign and domestic products as well as the increased importation of foodstuffs, there was a general feeling that by importing machinery and hiring foreign experts, continued economic development would be guaranteed. Therefore, the most vulnerable sector of society, the peasantry, suffered from lack of investment in the stagnated agricultural sector. The widening of the urban-rural gulf and the unprecedented growth of peasant migration to towns and cities made this economic strategy unworkable.

The ten-fold increase in oil revenues between 1963-73, had a tremendous inflationary effect on the whole of the economy. The large unexpected levels of imported materials coming into the country stretched the physical capacity of ports, roads, transport facilities, storage, distribution network to their limits, and bottlenecks became so commonplace that no amount of money could remove them.

B. Political and economic relations with the outside world

An economic strategy reliant on large oil revenues and a despotic political system was bound to have a profound effect on Iran's political and economic relations with the outside world. The cumulative inflow of foreign credit and capital attracted and inflated the value composition of foreign trade. The Shah became less dependent on Western finance, assumed a more powerful role in the region, and began to use oil as a diplomatic lever. The Western, as well as the Eastern countries began to adjust their strategies towards Iran in order to deal with the changing circumstances.

In Chapter 5 it was seen that, between 1960 and 1962, the Shah's external and internal positions were precarious. The Americans were disappointed with the results of their aid to Iran and began to pressure the Shah to undertake a programme of immediate reforms in the country. The resulting, Shah's 'white revolution,' made him more acceptable to the United States and the Lyndon Johnson administration began to shift American policies in a decidedly more pro-Pahlavi direction after 1963.⁴ As James Bill explains, Johnson believed strongly in the efficacy of force, and the reinforcement of order through military might. He valued the Shah of Iran for being supportive of his policies in Vietnam and for representing strong opposition to the spread of Communism in the Middle East. The Shah further increased his standing in American eyes when he criticised and condemned Nasser's radicalism in Egypt, stressed his support for Israel and indicated his willingness to fill the vacuum in the Persian Gulf following the British withdrawal.⁵

⁴ James A. Bill, *op. cit.*, p.176.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.177.

On the 30th of November 1967 the Agency for International Development (AID) closed its doors in Tehran after many years of intensive activity in the country. The rich oil deposits and growing wealth in Iran provided the possibility of economic opportunities for the USA, and when Johnson declared Iran a 'developed' country, American industry duly flooded in.⁶

On the 17th of May 1970, a group of thirty-five leading American industrialists and investors, led by David Rockefeller, began a six-day conference in Tehran. They left Tehran with the impression that Iran was a country that represented very real investment opportunities. This conference was condemned by middle-class nationalists and religious leaders alike, the most notable and vociferous opponent being Ayatollah Khomeini from his place of exile in Iraq.

On the 11th of October 1971 the Shah inaugurated a week-long social celebration and political extravaganza to commemorate 2500 years of the Persian monarchy. The estimated cost of these celebrations was around \$200 million⁷ and marked the beginning of a new phase of his monarchy, what James A. Bill describes as increased megalomania.⁸ "Indeed", Bill adds, "while the foreign dignitaries feasted on caviar, peacock, and Maxim's raspberries, a serious famine was in progress in the provinces of Sistan and Baluchestan, as well as in the area of Fars Province itself, the very province in which Perspolis is located."⁹

C. The Shah's illusion and the American attitude

In conjunction with the 2500 years celebrations, the Shah of Iran announced his intention to undertake major international political and economic responsibilities. In

⁶ Ibid., p.177.

⁷ Ibid., p.183.

⁸ Ibid., p.185.

⁹ Ibid., p.185.

January and February 1971 he hosted the OPEC meeting in Tehran, forcing them to accept the principle that henceforth the oil-producing countries would have the deciding voice in setting oil prices.

On the 12th of October 1972, during his visit to Russia, the Shah signed a friendship treaty with the Soviets. A month later he announced that the Indian Ocean was vital to Iran's security and thus indicated that Iran's exercise of power was no longer to be limited to the Persian Gulf. The Shah by this time had become the prime example and exponent of the terms of the Nixon Doctrine in action.

From May 30th to the 31st 1972, President Nixon and Henry Kissinger visited Tehran on their way back from a summit meeting in Moscow. During their meetings with the Shah they promised him that he could purchase any conventional weapons he wanted from the American inventory. According to a US Senate Staff report, Iran was to be exempted from the arms sales review process operating in the State and Defence Departments.¹⁰ Nixon and Kissinger, alert to the strategic importance of the Iran pressed an agreement into action, which one scholar described as "short-sighted and almost criminally careless".¹¹

Between 1972 and 1977 alone the value of US military sales to Iran amounted to \$16.2 billion.¹² The Iranian Defence budget increased from \$1.4 billion in 1972 to \$9.4 billion in 1977 - an increase of 680%. On the 7th of August 1976, Kissinger met the then Iranian Finance Minister, Anssary, in Tehran. Following their meeting they announced that Iran was to purchase another \$10 billion worth of American arms.

¹⁰ Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Staff Report, *U.S. Military Sales to Iran*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976), pp.viii-ix.

¹¹ Barry Rubin, *Paved with Good Intention: The American Experience and Iran*, (Oxford University Press, New York, 1980), p.261.

¹² Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, 'U.S. Military Sales', *Christian Science Monitor*, Jan.20, 1978, p.5.

Furthermore, a \$50 billion trade programme covering the period from 1975 to 1980 was also agreed, in which was included the sale of a number of 300 F16 and 200 F18 .

C. Tilly believes that the need for rapid political and economic development was the main reason for these expenditures.¹³

In July 1972 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee presented an unusually critical and prescient report on these huge arms transfers. Among the problems listed in this report were: the growing number of Americans in Iran, which could become potential hostages in the event of any government change ; the inability of Iran to absorb these weapons; and the increasing opportunities for Russia to gain access to the American military technology.

In July 1973 the Shah visited Washington. Nixon and Kissinger enlarged their commitments made the previous year in return for the Shah agreeing to hold the line against the increasing oil prices by OPEC. This had been the only major issue of contention between America and Iran with the former being annoyed by the Shah's constant use of the oil price strategy as a bargaining chip.

D. Iran's attitude towards other countries

The Shah's desire to establish good relations with Russia was based more upon political than economic concerns. The normalisation of these relations in 1963 was followed by greater co-operation during the later part of the 1960s and throughout the 1970s. The consequences of these improved relations meant that the Tudeh Party was emasculated and the Iranian left confused and somewhat isolated by the ambiguity of the Soviet Union's position. Furthermore, the Soviet Union undertook to stop its

¹³ C. Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States, AD 900-1991*, (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1991), p.212.

broadcasts of anti-Shah propaganda. The new understanding also reduced the risk of subversion by Soviet agents in Iran, which released the Shah's hand in dealings with Iraq, who also had cordial relations with Russia at the time.

On the Russian side, they were sought good relations with Iran for both political and economic reasons. They needed Iranian gas for their industries and domestic requirements and its growing markets for their foreign exchange requirements. By then, because of the changed political atmosphere in the world, Iran was able to establish moderate relations with Russia who was desperate to gain friends and influence in the Middle East region due to her increasing international isolation as a result of deteriorating relations with China.

From 1953 onwards British influence in Iran was replaced by American. Furthermore, Germany, France, Italy and Japan had begun to enter the world market as major economic players. The Shah tried to balance his economic relations with other countries according to their military, political and economic influences in the international arena. He often purchased important military items of comparative lower quality and at uncompetitive prices for the sake of expedient political priorities. The acquisition of the Chieftain tank from Britain in the late 1960s was a prime example of this policy. General F. Jam, the former Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces, who was in charge of an assessment team for arms purchases, told me, "These assessments were purely formalities. The deals were agreed beforehand". (Personal communication, 1982) In the 1960s British firms, especially those dealing with the Iranian Defence Ministry (which I was personally able to observe in documentary detail), began to gain a large foothold in the Iranian market.¹⁴

¹⁴

As the Military Attaché in London in 1980, 104 documents on the contracts between Britain and Iran came to my office. (Personal observation, 1980-1983)

The huge oil revenues of the 1970s, which could have built up the basic economic, social and political structures of the country, were for the most part largely wasted on frivolous extravagances.

Darioush Homayoun, an intellectual and former minister in the government, gives the best description of the attitudes of those in charge of Iranian affairs at the time by quoting their opinions on the problems besetting the country. Hovayda, as Prime Minister said, "whatever the economics experts recommend, I do the opposite". Alam, as the Prime Minister and a close friend of the Shah believed that the management of Iranian society needed less wisdom and more force. A. Rouhani, a technocrat said, "We buy our problems with money". And an anonymous and successful businessman was quoted as saying, "\$100 million of the \$20 billion oil revenues is my share to distribute among two hundred other money spinners in Iran".¹⁵

7.3 Iraq

A. Iraq since the Ba'th Coup in 1968

Power Consolidation

The accidental death of Abd al-Salam Arif created a political vacuum in the country that lasted until the Ba'th's takeover in 1968. Early in the morning of 17 July al-Da'ud, the Commander of Republican Guard, took control of the radio station, and al-Nayif took charge of the Ministry of Defence. The regime, deprived of the essential foundations of power, collapsed without resistance allowing the transfer of power to proceed in a smooth and non-confrontational manner with Arif being dispatched to an honourable exile.

¹⁵ Darioush Homayoun, *Sé Goftar; Dirouz, Emrouz, Farda*, in Persian, (U.S.A., 1981), p.32.

Power in the new regime was centred around al-Nayif the Prime Minister, al-Da'ud the Minister of Defence, and the Ba'th officers. On the 18th of July the formation of a seven-man Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) was announced consisting entirely of military officers.

The Ba'th faction was eventually able to seize control and to exercise supreme executive and legislative authority. Abd al-Rahman al-Da'ud while visiting the Iraqi troops in Jordan on the 29th of July was detained and denied permission to return home. Shortly afterwards the Prime Minister, al-Nayif, was arrested by a group of officers led by Saddam Hussein.

Major-General Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr and his colleagues in the government, which consisted of fourteen Ba'thists, nine independent nationalists and four Kurds, were soon shown to have no clear political policies or experience in administration. In the course of the first two years of their rule, al-Bakr and his associates devoted themselves to imposing Ba'thist rule on the country. The regime secured its position in power by securing the support of the armed forces and ruthlessly stamping out all forms of opposition.

In September a provisional constitution was issued, which declared 'Islam' to be the religion of the state, 'Socialism' as the foundation of the economy, and the Revolutionary Command Council the supreme legislative and executive authority in the country.¹⁶

Soon after the promulgation of the Provisional Constitution the atmosphere of indiscriminate terror, familiar to Iraqis since 1963, returned. It hit out quite indiscriminately at both right and left-wing elements, Communists, Nasserists, pro-

¹⁶ *Le Monde*, Paris, 24th September, 1968. Also: Kedourie, op. cit., 1978, pp.183-198, for following revision in 1973 and 1974.

Syrian Ba'thists, and former government officials. Al-Bakr, strengthened by his increased experience, began to build up his own security apparatus, headed by his younger relative Saddam Hussein.

Early in 1969, a new Regional Command was announced whose members consisted of, Al-Bakr, Saddam and eleven influential individuals from the 'Sunni triangle' bounded by Baghdad, Mosul and Tikrit. Al-Bakr and Saddam, in order to take greater control of the RCC, tried to consolidate Ba'thist supremacy in the armed forces. This resulted in the announcement of 3,000 new commissions that effectively by-passed the established chain of command and placed ultimate control in the hands of Saddam Hussein.¹⁷

The close ties between Al-Bakr and Saddam Hussein, had enabled the latter to rise from relative obscurity in the 1960s to occupy the second most important position in the country, the vice-chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council, within three years. As far as can be ascertained, until shortly before Al-Bakr's departure from politics in July 1979, the partnership seems to have been a complementary one in which the two men together managed to achieve a degree of domination that neither could have achieved on his own.¹⁸

The regime in its propaganda made every effort to demonstrate its opposition to Britain and the USA. Its hostility was also directed against the Shah of Iran and Israel. Whilst, it introduced harsh measures against the Communists operating within the country it somewhat paradoxically recognised the GDR and sought to develop closer links with the Soviet Union.

¹⁷ Batatu, *op. cit.*, p.1093.

¹⁸ Marian Farouk-Sluglett, Peter Sluglett, *op. cit.*, p.121.

Since all internal Party decisions are secret and the RCC has never published a record or minutes of its proceedings, it is difficult to explain the real nature of what was taking place between the individuals occupying the highest positions in the regime. However what is clear is the fact that Saddam Hussein had managed to establish himself as the strong man of the regime well before September 1971 by removing all influential members of the RCC who challenged his authority. Al-Bakr and Saddam always contrived to present the decisions of their rule as reflecting those of the Ba'th Party as a whole and to foster the image of the RCC as a collegiate body in which collective decisions were arrived at in democratic fashion. The Ba'th Party made strenuous efforts to present itself as popular and representative, through its emphasis on populist/nationalist doctrines, in a bid to extend its support to wider sections of the Iraqi population. One of the most important preoccupations of the governments in Iraq has been the 'Kurdish Question'. The Iraqi authorities saw no hope for a solution or compromise to the problem as long as Barzani insisted on Kurdish autonomy, the creation of an independent state with Kirkuk as its capital and control over the oil surrounding it. This hastened the need to restore friendly relations with Iran, which resulted in the signing Algiers' Accord between the two countries.

B. The Kurdish question since the 1958 revolution

According to the Zohab Treaty (1639) between the Ottoman and Iran, the Kurds were formally divided between these two countries. When the Ottoman Empire collapsed (1920), the Kurds were further divided between Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. Since then the 'Kurdish Question' has been one of the most contentious political issues in the region. The hasty division of the Kurds between these various countries occurred

as a direct result of the geopolitical and state building policies of the West in the region during the 1920s.

(1) During the Qasim Period

In Chapter Five we observed how Mulla Mustafa Barzani went into exile in the Soviet Union after his failed uprising. However, the Kurdish leaders had managed to maintain some contact with the Free Officers and the KDP generally welcomed their take-over of power in July 1958.

In the struggles between Qasim and his opponents the Kurds, suspicious of schemes for Arab unity, ranged themselves against those who were calling for unity with the United Arab Republic (UAR). The KDP, for this and other historical reasons, became closely associated with the ICP. In spite of a general unity of aims tensions between Barzani, as the main force in Kurdish tribal politics, and Ibrahim Ahmad, who represented the political aspirations of urbanised Kurds, began to come to the fore resulting in the dissolution of the KDP and ICP alliance.

In April 1959, 850 Kurds returned from exile in the Soviet Union, arriving at Bassra on board a Soviet ship. At this stage Qasim refused to consider any suggestions for the devolution of power, let alone entertain thoughts of granting autonomy to the Kurds. The Kurds for their part had been misled in taking his benevolence towards them at more than face value as most of the Free Officers found the idea of Kurdish autonomy anathema.

Although the Kurdish leader had to register some degree of protest against the slow rate of progress towards their political aspirations, at the same time the Kurds wanted to support Qasim because of his refusal to join the UAR.

In 1960-61 Mulla Mustafa visited the Soviet Union with the intention of asking the Soviet leaders to put pressure on Qasim to meet their demands but he was to return

to Iraq empty handed. By the summer of 1961 fighting broke out between Barzani tribes and their traditional enemies the Herki and the Surchi, who were tacitly supported by the Government. In September the Barzani forces occupied Zakho, with government forces retaliating by bombing a number of Barzani villages. This was to be the start of a prolonged campaign that continued intermittently until 1975.

The conflict between the two forces had arrived at a stalemate position where both sides were unlikely to achieve an ultimate victory. Therefore, by the winter of 1961 some, though by no means all, of the Kurdish leaders began to think that it would be sensible and prudent to attempt to make contact and try to come to some arrangement with Qasim's potential successors.

At this point, neither the National Democratic Party nor the ICP were in a position to go into an anti-Qasim alliance.¹⁹ Therefore, paradoxically, the only chance for the Kurds lay with the Ba'thists and nationalists, in spite of their apparent lack of enthusiasm for any concrete acknowledgement of Kurdish national aspirations.

The KDP made contact with Tahir Yahya in the spring of 1962. Ibrahim Ahmad gave assurances that if Yahya and his associates succeeded in overthrowing Qasim, he and Barzani would announce a ceasefire.¹⁹ The Kurdish war exemplified Qasim's weakness as a political leader in that he had failed to keep on good terms or recognise those who were his natural allies. It also highlights the growing frustration and desperation of the Kurdish position as well as the opportunism of some of their leaders to readily throw in their lot with Qasim's opponents, whose commitment to the Kurdish cause was less than total to say the least.

¹⁹ Sa'ad Jawad, *op. cit.*, pp.211-219.

(2) During the Arif Presidencies

When Arif assumed power, as a token of goodwill and a sign of his 'commitment' to the Kurds he included two Kurds amongst the members of his new cabinet. However, these appointments were merely cosmetic exercises, as the Arab unity claimed by him and his associates proved totally incompatible with the Kurds' aspiration for autonomy. The Talebani negotiations with the new Government made little progress. Barzani declared that he would not hesitate to start fighting again if the government did not declare its positive commitment to Kurdish autonomy. However, after a few months of negotiations and procrastination over the exact definition of terms like "centralisation", and "decentralisation" and the area to be included in "Kurdistan", negotiations finally broke down and fighting recommenced in June 1963.

Abd al-Salam Arif declared his own personal desire to end the war and approached Barzani secretly to explore the terms of a possible ceasefire. Ibrahim Ahmad and Jalal Talebani resisted the negotiations and were eventually pushed into Iranian territory by the opponent forces of Barzani. The negotiations that took place on the 10th of February 1964 were merely used as a tactical device by both Barzani and Arif in the pursuit of personal objectives. In the winter of 1964-65 sporadic fighting broke out once again and by April 1965 full-scale war underway. The Government forces initially gained some success over the Kurdish forces, which resulted in the KDP forces, financed by Baghdad, turning against Barzani. In May 1966, one month after Arif's death, Barzani, who had been receiving substantial financial and military aid from Iran, finally defeated the government forces.

On the 15th of June 1966 Al-Bazzaz appeared on radio and television and declared himself ready to recognise "Kurdish nationalism and the Kurd's national rights". After twelve days of negotiations, on 29th June the "bi-national character of the

Iraq state" was unequivocally announced.²⁰ This was the most far-reaching proposal taken so far in attempting to reach a settlement. Its principles were to be echoed in the Ba'th Party's Manifesto of 11th March 1970.

Al-Bazzaz's farsightedness and sincerity in his attempt to achieve an equitable settlement were not in doubt, but he found it almost impossible to implement the terms of the declaration and a few weeks later he fell from office and the Agreement with him. The next government made a number of feeble efforts to attack Barzani by arming Ahmad and Talebani. However this proved to be a futile exercise and Barzani, with Iranian and possibly Israeli assistance as well, consolidated his position. The impasse continued until and well beyond the Ba'th takeover in July 1968.²¹

(3) The Kurds since 1968

The Cabinet of the 30th of July 1968, despite including representatives from both Kurdish factions, continued to support the Ahmad-Talebani group. These tactics eventually pushed Barzani into action against his Kurdish rivals before moving against the regime itself. In mid-December 1968 the Barzani attacked government forces, killing twenty soldiers and civilians.

These events coincided with the 7th Regional Congress of the Ba'th Party during the course of which, Al-Bakr, Saddam Hussein and their associates emerged as the dominant power group on the Revolutionary Command Council. The regime, based on its own insecurity and lack of strength in its armed forces, began to push for a peaceful settlement to the conflict based on the June 1966 Declaration. Barzani, mindful of the cordial relations that existed between the regime and Ahmad-Talebani, considered the

²⁰ Kedourie, op. cit., pp.198-200.

²¹ Marian Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, op. cit., p.104.

government's overtures to be a sign of its weakness. In March 1969 his forces attacked the Iraq Petroleum Corporation installation at Kirkuk reducing its pumping capacity by 70% for ten days.²²

The situation was further exacerbated, and the Iraqi government's position made ever more precarious, by the Iranians decision to abandon the terms of the 1937 Treaty in April 1969. This hard line attitude taken by Iran, combined with its considerable financial and military aid to the Kurds, posed a major threat to the stability of the regime in Baghdad. In spite of the government announcement of the creation of the new all-Kurdish province of Dahuk on 28th June, as promised in the 1966 Declaration, its forces continued their military engagements by massacring the inhabitants of two villages and bombing civilian targets.²³

However, due to the growing opposition to the war amongst members in its own armed forces the regime once again attempted to reach a negotiated settlement with Barzani. On the 11th of March 1970, after a series of secret negotiations had taken place, the regime announced that it agreed to recognise the "legitimacy of the Kurdish nationality".²⁴ Furthermore, it agreed to implement a series of concrete measures towards this end: Kurdish linguistic rights; Kurdish participation in government; and Kurdish administrators for Kurdish areas; agrarian reform laws in the north. However, the most important steps towards unifying the governmental and the administrative units of those areas populated by a Kurdish majority were never implemented.²⁵ Indeed, in a bid to avoid the implementation of this part of the Manifesto in the area around Kirkuk, which contains the country's principal oilfields, the regime tried to change the ethnic

²² *Financial Times*, London 4th and 15th March 1969; *Sunday Times*, London, 11th May 1969.

²³ *Observer Foreign News Services*, London, 30th October 1969.

²⁴ Uriel Dann, 'The Kurdish National Movement in Iraq', *Jerusalem Quarterly*, 9 (1978), p.141.

²⁵ Kedourie, op. cit., 1978, pp.231-4.

composition of the area.²⁶ The Manifesto in essence provided the Ba'th party with a period of breathing space within which to recast the Kurdish policy more to its own advantage. However, despite these turns of events Barzani decided to break off relations with Iran and gave his full support to the Ba'th regime.

A high level body drawn from both sides was charged with working out the detailed implementation of the Manifesto over a four year period in order to provide a permanent and durable settlement to the problem. With the approval of other parties, especially the Communists, the Ba'th Party began to devote itself to the task of consolidating its own power.

Regular meetings continued to take place between members from both sides with the most significant breakthrough coming with the inclusion of a number of clauses in the new Provisional Constitution of July 1970. These stated explicitly for the first time that "the people of Iraq are formed of two principal nationalities; the Arab nationality and the Kurd nationality" and that the legitimate rights of all minorities within the unity of Iraq were recognised.

However, the regime was not seriously considering implementing any of these proposals and was merely trying to alleviate the Kurdish problem until it had fully consolidated its own central power base. The cracks between the two sides soon appeared when it became clear that the government had chosen Arbil to be the capital of the new autonomous area rather than Barzani's wished for choice Kirkuk. The tensions and suspicions between the two sides increased even further following the refusal of Habib Karim's presidency and attempts to assassinate Barzani and his son.

²⁶ I.S. Vanly, 'Kurdistan in Iraq', in Gerard Chaliand, ed. *People Without a Country: The Kurds and Kurdistan*, (Zed Press, London, 1980), p.171.

In May 1971 Saddam took personal control of the chairmanship of the dual committee and began to expedite the process of implementing the Manifesto. This was vital in view of the impending belligerency of Iran who had declared its intention to act as the United State's stalking horse in the Gulf after Britain's withdrawal at the end of 1971.²⁷

However, the Ba'th's National Action Charter that emerged from these negotiations at the end of 1971 merely represented another attempt to gather support from as many quarters as possible and served only to reiterate the March Manifesto declaration on Kurdish autonomy.

Nevertheless, the Charter did set out a number of other important objectives. The national economy was to be reorganised with government guidance and to be freed from foreign dependence and domination, most notably in relation to issue of the country's oil wealth. Relations with friendly and socialist countries were to be developed and a broad coalition of all national patriotic and progressive elements was to be formed in order to develop a democratic, popular and unitary political system. It was hoped that through the implementation of these measures the regime would succeed in widening its appeal to include all members of society.

The pursuance of such a policy was crucial given the development of international events such as, the ominous direction of the dispute over Shatt al-Arab and other parts of the frontier with Iran, the creation of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) on Iraq's southern flank and the increases in American military supplies to Iran, which all left Iraq in a position of increased vulnerability²⁸.

²⁷ Barry Rubin, *op. cit.*, pp.125-35.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.125-35.

Furthermore, the Syrians regarded the regime as heretical and the Jordanians considered Iraq to be a radical regime, particularly in relation to the Palestine issue. Iraq's relations with Egypt had deteriorated further under Nasser's successors, and the Saudis along with most other rulers in the Gulf were suspicious and fearful of the Ba'ath's true intentions.

Although trade with Europe continued, relations with America had ceased since 1967. Diplomatic relations with Britain were broken off on the 30th of November 1971, and those with Iran followed suit as a result of the Iranian occupation of the three small islands in the Gulf. Iraq's only firm European friend seemed to be France. Thus, Iraq's diplomatic, political and economic future was predicated at this time almost exclusively on its relations with the Soviet Union and other Comecon countries.²⁹

(4) The Last Kurdish Episode

As early as May 1971 Barzani was once again complaining that the regime was trying to alter demographic constituencies by moving Arabs, particularly Christians, to Kirkuk. The aborted attempts to assassinate the Barzanis in 1971 and the deportations of persons of Iranian origin, many of whom were Shi'i Kurds, (interpreted by Barzani as a move to reduce the number of Kurds in Iraq) added to the tension and mutual suspicion between the two parties.

By the spring of 1972 Barzani had resumed his contacts with Iran. At the same time the Iraqi's pro-Soviet stance, and the threat it appeared to be posing towards the stability of the Gulf area, became a matter of concern for the Americans and Iran.³⁰ Barzani does not seem to have been sufficiently alert to the fact that the Shah's desire to

²⁹ Marian Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, op. cit., p.144.

³⁰ F. Ebrahim, *Die Kurdische Nation albeweyung in Irak: Konflikt in Der Dritten Welt*, (Berlin, Auflage, 1983), p.717.

undermine the Iraqi regime did not imply unconditional support for an autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan.

Barzani decided to exact a radical change in position by, apparently under the influence of emissaries of the CIA, substituting American for Soviet support. On the Iranian side, however, as James A. Bill explains, an important meeting concerning military purchases took place between the Shah, Henry Kissinger and President Nixon at which "the Shah also asked for joint American-Iranian aid to the Kurds".³¹

In Iraq, the government was relocating sections of the population by forcing thousands to leave their homes. The newspapers, at the same time, were advising Barzani to stop sabotaging railway lines and oil installations and to sever his links with Iran.³² However, at the end of 1972 the Iraqi Air Force began bombing Kurdish villages in the north and a new war seemed imminent.³³

As a favour to the Shah, the USA channelled \$16 million worth of CIA funds to the Kurds between 1972-75. This was in addition to the large amounts of assistance that the Kurds had been receiving from Israel at the same time.³⁴ However, neither the USA nor Iran were anxious to see a Kurdish victory. The real reason behind the aid packages, according to a House Select Committee Intelligence Report (Pike Report), was to maintain a level of hostilities between the insurgents that would eventually sap the resources of Iraq.³⁵ In fact, the USA had been slowly withdrawing its aid to the Kurds by late 1973 and through 1974.³⁶

Although the October war provided a brief respite to the internal hostilities, the situation in the Kurdish area remained tense. The Iranians, perhaps disappointed with

³¹ James A. Bill, op. cit., p.205.

³² Al-Hayat, (Beirut), 13th August 1972.

³³ *The Times*, 4th November 1972.

³⁴ James A. Bill, op. cit., p.205. Also, Ian Black and Benny Norris, *Israel's Secret Wars*, (Warner Book, London, 1992), pp.183-5.

³⁵ Ibid., p.205.

³⁶ Ibid., p.206.

the progress of their negotiations with Iraq in Istanbul, delivered a sophisticated anti-aircraft system to the Kurds. Barzani, feeling that he now had the full support of a powerful foreign state, began to transform the conflict from a guerrilla war into a full-scale conventional war. As a consequence, however, he had allowed himself to be manoeuvred into a position of great vulnerability and almost total dependence on the good will of the Shah of Iran and the USA.³⁷

In June 1973 in an interview with the *Washington Post* Barzani asked America to help him in his struggle against the "wolves" in Baghdad. In return he offered the USA participation in Kurdish oil exploitation in the Kirkuk Oil fields. In September 1973, in an attempt to please the less intransigent elements within the Kurdish movement, the government of Iraq declared that the KDP, led by Barzani, was not synonymous with the wishes and aspirations Kurdish people.³⁸

However, in March 1974 events took a dramatic turn when open hostilities between Iraq and Iran broke out in earnest. Iraqi casualties were extremely high and military expenditure escalated from ID 102 in 1972 to ID356 million in 1975. The situation in Kurdistan and other frontier areas between the two countries became so tense that full-scale war between these countries seemed almost inevitable.

At this stage United Nations intervention and the mediation of King Hussein's and President Anwar Sadat's called a halt to hostilities and resulted in the 1975 Algiers Agreement. As Marian Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett point out,

In both the long and the short term, the wider implications of the Algiers Agreement should not be underestimated, and go far beyond the interests of the parties most closely involved in the settlement.³⁹

³⁷ *The Times*, 1st March 1973.

³⁸ BBC, S.W.B., 27th September 1973.

³⁹ Marian Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, op. cit., p.171.

C. Social and economic policies of the new regime

As Chapter Five showed, the Qasim regime had been responsible for breaking the social and political power of the semi-feudal landlords in Iraq. This had facilitated the rapid expansion of market relations in the countryside despite the fact that private ownership of land and agricultural machinery remained intact. However, following Qasim's fall from power the speed of reform began to slow down, and this factor combined with the absence of experience in improved farming practice, had failed to eradicate poverty or improve living standards in the countryside.

At the beginning of 1969, the agricultural compensation payments decreed in the 1958 Law and its subsequent amendment of 1964 were cancelled and a new method of agrarian reform was introduced in 1970. The average annual percentage of development expenditure allocated to agriculture rose from 16.75% over the period 1965-68 to 34.25% over the period 1969-1972.⁴⁰ Although the living standards of the peasantry were improving, in 1972 less than 3% of all landlords still owned at least 30% of all agricultural land.⁴¹

The provision of health and education services in rural areas were also positive signs of progress. Between 1969 and 1971 measures relating to conditions of work, labour unions, pensions and social security, minimum wages and maximum working hours, and the prohibition of child labour, were enacted by law.⁴² These social improvements also served to satisfy many of the demands that had traditionally been put forward by the Communists and the left, which allowed the Ba'at to consolidate their position by placating the opposition.

⁴⁰ Javid Hashim, *Development Planning in Iraq: Historical Perspective and New Directions*, quoted by Rodney Wilson, "Western, Soviet and Egyptian Influences on Iraq's Development Planning", in T. Niblock (ed.) *Iraq: The Contemporary State*, (Croom Helm, London, 1982), pp.224-225.

⁴¹ Chris Kutschera, *Le mouvement National Kurds*, (Flammarian, Paris, 1979).

⁴² Batatu, op. cit., 1978, p.138.

D. Nationalisation of the Iraq Petroleum Corporation and the economy

Between 1959 and the 1970s the IPC was the main source of finance for the government, providing 84% of total government revenues throughout the period.⁴³ The IPC held a monopoly on oil production and in spite of the considerable rises in the oil price in 1971, Iraq remained a relatively poor country with per capita income amounting to less than \$120 for that particular year.⁴⁴ For Iraq the substantial increase in oil revenues was vital to keep pace with its development intentions and population growth. Progress and development of the North Rumaila oil fields, with participation from the Russians, remained slow and did little to meet the vast needs of the country. The INOC, formed in 1964 to take control of the repossessed IPC oil field established under the terms of Law 80 of 1961, had still not managed to start production, or even establish a processing plant for that matter, by 1968. National opinion began to be dictated and influenced by the National Action Charter, the failure of negotiations with the IPC as well as events abroad such as Libya's nationalisation of BP, on the 13th of January 1972. Baghdad radio was to announce that "Iraq's full rights will be wrested from the oil company", and soon afterwards, Saddam and a high level delegation flew to Moscow calling for a "solid strategic alliance with the Soviet Union".⁴⁵

In March negotiations with the IPC were resumed and some measure of agreement was reached. On the 7th of April, Alexsi Kosygin, the Soviet Prime Minister, inaugurated production at North Rumaila, and two days later he and Al-Bakr signed a fifteen year Iraqi-Soviet Friendship Treaty.

⁴³ Michael Brown, 'The Nationalisation of the Iraq Petroleum Company', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 10, (1979), p.113.

⁴⁴ Fiche du Monde Arabe, 26 April 1978.

⁴⁵ BBC, SWB, 13th January 1972; ARR, 10th February 1972.

The first shipment of oil from the Rumaila field left Fao a week later, and a series of sales deals for the new oil, with Brazil, Italy, the USA and the GDR, were also concluded.

On the 1st of June the Iraqi government, in response to the refusal of the IPC to produce more oil, nationalised the company. Syria was to follow suit a few hours later.

However, the Iraqi government did not nationalise the BPC and MPC, which meant that 25% of Iraqi oil production could still be disposed of through normal channels. Iraq then successfully found customers in the world oil market willing to purchase its product, which served to quickly overcome the economic difficulties experienced in the immediate aftermath of oil nationalisation. Purchasing governments were generally more concerned with ensuring stable markets for their own goods and stable oil supplies for their needs, than in seeking justice for the oil companies. The IPC experience provided the spark for further nationalisation, which saw all remaining foreign holdings being taken over by the government by 1975.⁴⁶

In 1970, Iraq, in both political and economic terms, was in a good position. The Communists and radical movements of the country had given their full support to the Ba'th's external and internal policies and the party had received widespread popular support as a result of its oil nationalisation programme. This popular support was reinforced in the image acquired by Iraq and its leadership abroad as the standard bearers of the Arab Nation. What is more, in spite of the prevailing cordial relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, the regime had continued to maintain firm commercial links with the West.

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International Herald Tribune, 9th December 1975; ARR, 8 December 1975.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter has shown how economic considerations influenced the ideological positioning and actions of the great powers. It also shows how each of the regional powers attempted to extend their authority over their own internal and external affairs as and when the opportunity arose. The cause of disputes lay in those circumstances when the great powers felt that their economic or strategic interests were being threatened by the activities and policies of the regional powers. The historical facts presented in the foregoing, notably in the third chapter, demonstrate the extent to which the great powers were willing to go in order to protect their self-interests. This was seen in regard to political developments in Iran and more recently in the eight-years war between Iraq and Iran that occurred in the 1980s. The western military alliance, which was formed against Saddam Hussein, and which included some Middle Eastern countries as well, was a clear demonstration of the primacy given to external interests.

The regional powers have their own but limited space of manoeuvre, but are quickly brought to task when their econo-geopolitical interests are seen to be in conflict with those of the great powers. This asymmetrical relationship was shown in the oil embargo, the quadrupling of oil prices under OPEC and the Algiers Accord, all of which failed due to the fact that their political, economic and strategic implications went beyond the region and affected the interests and workings of the world capitalist system.

The contemporary political relations between the regional powers, (notably Iran and Iraq), and the West, (particularly America), show a never-ending push and pull manoeuvre employed by both sides, in which, the latter's will is ultimately forced upon the former. As a consequence, the people of the region are trapped in a vicious circle of Western capitalist exploitation, which sees them condemned to suffer dictatorial rule

and corrupt governments. A small élite enjoy a luxurious standard of living, but for the majority of the population poverty is the norm, a fact which contributes to the further instability of social life in this region.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Edward R. Fried and Philip H. Trezise, *Oil Security*, (Brooking Institution, Washington, D.C. 1993), p.4.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TREATY OF THE GOOD NEIGHBOURING RELATIONS BETWEEN IRAQ AND IRAN¹

8.1 Introduction

The differences between Iran and Iraq are historical and their causes are rooted in the thousands of years of wars between Iran, Byzantine and the Ottoman in the east of Mesopotamia. The first major war between the Ottoman and Iran, known as "The Twenty Years War", started in 1514 at Chaldoran, and was brought to an end on 29 May 1555 with the signing of the Amasieh Treaty. However, this treaty could not bring lasting peace to the region and indeed, was to set the pattern for ensuing relationships between the two countries, which consisted of a cycle of conflicts followed by a short-lived and uneasy peace. The Second Erzerum Treaty of 1847 provided a period of peace lasting for almost one and a half centuries but this was to be the last agreement of any substance or authenticity. Indeed, this treaty was also to be destabilised and fall foul of political meddling in the form of an explanatory note, which prepared the ground for future controversies and hostilities, eventually culminating in the 1980 war between Iraq and Iran.

The Algiers Accord, which ended the turbulent relations between Iran and Iraq in 1975, could have provided a solid foundation for an authentic peace had Iran not been plunged into domestic turmoil by the "so-called Revolution". However, despite its ultimate failure this Treaty stands as a turning point in the historical relations between these two countries. This view is further enhanced by my own personal involvement in

¹ For the text of the Treaty see Appendix 8

the events surrounding the Treaty, its negotiation and implementation. Much of what follows, therefore, reflects what might be called participant/observer 'fieldwork'.

However, this Treaty, as mentioned before, must be seen as a great political achievement by the leaders of Iran and Iraq, and for the region as a whole. The Shah, in his book, *Answer to History*, writes,

"During the Algiers Oil Conference in 1975, I spoke at length with Vice President Saddam Hussein. We agreed to bury our differences and succeeded in ending the misunderstandings which colonialist influences had maintained between us.

Vice President Saddam Hussein agreed to negotiate the question of Shatt al-Arab River according to international law. As in the case of the Arrass River, the waters were divided midway between Iran and Russia.

In principle, I told Vice President Saddam that the happiness and prosperity of Iraq were important to the security of Iran".

However, if U.N. Resolution 348 is the pretext for this important Treaty, it is the political, social, economic and military developments embodied in the last 125 years of history in the region, starting with the Second Erzerum Treaty in 1847, which provide it with its context.

Although the differences between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq led to Saddam Hussein acting unlawfully against international law and deciding to ignore the Treaty, after eight years of war with Iran he was eventually forced to reaccept its terms. A brief historical context of the Treaty, will further our understanding and knowledge regarding its significance.

This chapter sets out to explain the circumstances that led to the signing of this agreement, before looking at the terms of the Treaty itself, and finally examining the achievements that arose as a result of its implementation. The reaction of the superpowers and various other countries towards the Treaty, followed by the witness and motivations behind the Treaty, are also discussed in this chapter. Of particular

importance is the need to examine the development of relations between the two countries, especially following the Iranian Revolution and the annulment of the Treaty by Saddam on 17 September 1980.

8.2 The Historical Context of the Treaty

As chapter two indicates, most disputes between Iran and Iraq, tacitly or openly, are centred around rival claims over the Shatt al-Arab. Iran, despite the rulings of international law, had continually refused to give up its claim over the river borders. In contrast, successive Iraqi governments, both before and after the revolution of 1958, have refused to concede on the issue of sovereignty over the Shatt al-Arab inherited from the colonial powers. Furthermore, they have refused to recognise the 5 kilometre area of the Shatt al-Arab near Abadan decreed by the 1937 Treaty between Iraq and Iran to be under Iranian sovereignty. The former foreign minister of Iran, Bagher-e-Kazemi writes,

“The British, during the past 125 years in the negotiations about the Erzerum Treaty, 1947, and in the Istanbul before the First World War and before Iraq being a member of the United Nations, tried to deny Iran from the Sovereignty over the Shatt al-Arab.”²

During the reign of Reza Shah, Malek Fasal and Nuri Said visited Iran on many occasions in an attempt to resolve the dispute but little or no progress was made. This was to set the pattern for future negotiations, which despite the changes in leadership were to continue in the same vein throughout Iraq's post-revolutionary years.

Both sides held firm to their stated positions. The Shah of Iran in a newspaper interview in November 1959, reiterated the Iranian position by saying, “How is it possible to relinquish a right which is recognised by international community for all nations”. Abd al-Karim Qasim quickly countered this claim by stating on the 2nd of December that, “the 5 Kilometre sovereignty of Iran over Shatt al-Arab is the outcome

² Bagher-e-Kazemi, *Shatt al-Arab and Iraq's Border* (Ayandeh, Fourth Period, No.6, 1951)

of the foreign colonialist interferences into Iraq's internal affairs. Therefore Iran must relinquish that sovereignty back to Iraq, otherwise we have enough forces to take it back to our motherland."³

Qasim also expanded his claims to include Khoram-Shahr and Ahvaze, the two most important strategic cities in the south of Iran.⁴ In fact these claims were not just words of mouth as the Iraqi government was funding many separatist organisations operating in the area in an attempt to undermine the sovereignty of Iran over its vital ports in the south.⁵

During Arifs's periods in power certain steps were taken in a bid to resolve the dispute. The most significant of these came in June 1963 when the Iraqi Oil Minister Abd al-Azziz Vatari visited Iran and agreed to the country's joint exploitation of the oil resources in Khaneghein area within the OPEC framework.⁶ In February 1964, Sobhi al-Hamid the Foreign Minister of Iraq visited Tehran to discuss the disputed issues over Shatt al-Arab but the final declaration that emerged from these discussions was so ambiguous that the Ettelaat newspaper called it an "Obscured declaration".⁷

In 1965 the conflicts in the north of the country intensified and the border clashes between the two countries increased. Although the Iranian government knew that insisting on the implementation of the terms of the 1937 Treaty was pointless, the Foreign Minister of Iran asked the Iraqi government to accept the halfway principle over Shatt al-Arab as a means of providing a basis on which to discuss the other disputed issues. In spite of the Arab Lawyers' Conference in Baghdad, whose resolution supported the separatist claims over the province of Khousestan, the Iranian Foreign Minister

³ Asghar-e-Ja'fari Valadani, *Noghat-e-Bohrani Dar Khalidj-e-Fars*, (Entesharat-e-Keyhan, Tehran, 1993), p.233.

⁴ Ibid, 223

⁵ Ibid, 223.

⁶ Shahram-e-Chubin, Sepeher-e-Zabih, *The Foreign Relations of Iran, A Developing State in a Zone of Great Power Conflict*, (Berkley University of California Press, 1974), pp. 176-177.

⁷ Ettelaat, (24 February 1964).

accepted his Iraqi counterpart's invitation to visit Iraq. During this visit they insisted on the importance of negotiation over the territorial water resources, but failed to discuss the issues involving Shatt al-Arab themselves.

Three months later, Abd al-Rahman Arif, shortly followed by the Prime Minister of Iraq General Tahir Yahya, visited Iran with both parties agreeing to establish a series of committees to discuss and examine the different issues concerning the two countries. When Yahya was in Tehran he insisted upon the importance of the Shatt al-Arab issue and its equal usage by both countries.⁸ During this period, as in previous ones, the Shatt-al Arab issue was to provide the stumbling block between the establishment of good relations between Iraq and Iran. Such was the sensitivity of the problem that both sides were reluctant to engage with the issue seriously, a situation that was to continue under the tenure of the new Iraqi government led by General Hassan al-Bakr and Iran.

Iran recognised the new government in Iraq immediately and General Abd al-Ghafar al-Takriti as the new Prime Minister visited Iran, stating in a newspaper interview that, "We wish this friendship between the two countries to continue." The Iranian Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister paid a visit to Baghdad and asked the government of Iraq for an honourable treaty over the disputed issues. After a series of negotiations the Iraqi authorities asked Iran to concede the 5 Kilometre sovereignty over Shatt al-Arab which had been stated in the 1937 Treaty. The Iranian Deputy Minister Abbas Khalatbari left Baghdad the day after and announced, "Because of the 10 years of negligence by Iraq to implement the 1937 treaty obligations, this treaty on the basis of "Relius sic statilius", is annulled."

The Iraqi government in a letter to the United Nations Secretary wrote, "Annulment of the Treaty by Iran under any circumstances is unlawful and this is an

⁸ Keyhan, 10th July, 1967.

absolute law, even in cases of wars".⁹ However, at this stage, Iraq referred the issue to the U.N. for arbitration who failed to find a resolution to the problem. The Iraqi government then expelled twenty thousand Iranian inhabitants from Iraq. Iran started to dispatch its cargo ships from her ports under the protection of her naval vessels ignoring Iraq's threats that any ship found not flying the Iraqi flag would not be allowed to navigate in the river'.

When Iran occupied three islands in the Persian Gulf, tensions between the countries were heightened and the Iraqi government retaliated by breaking-off diplomatic relations with Iran. A series of clashes then took place in the northern parts of Iraq that soon escalated leading both countries to deploy troops to the border areas. The two countries instrumentally used the rival Kurd factions to their advantage and full-scale war between the two countries now seemed imminent. Under these circumstances the U.N. Security Council issued Resolution No. 348 and asked for an immediate ceasefire between the two countries. According to this Resolution, both sides accepted to:

- A. Hold and maintain the ceasefire;
- B. Withdraw their forces from the borders;
- C. Avoid any hostile action;
- D. Start negotiations.

8.3 A Bright Horizon Emerged

To implement the said Resolution, the Foreign Ministers of both countries met with each other in January 1975 in Istanbul. This was the first meeting at this level between Ministers of these countries since 1968. Throughout the negotiations the Iraqi

⁹ U.N. Security Document S/9185 (29 April 1969).

delegation repeated their same claims over the Shatt al-Arab and the talks eventually broke-down.

One and a half months later, the newspapers in Algiers suddenly announced that, "during the OPEC summit and by the intermediation of President Houari Baumedienne, the Shah of Iran and Vice President Saddam Hussein agreed upon the principles concerning the resolution of the disputes between their countries".¹⁰

To implement this accord, the two Foreign Ministers met each other from the 15th of March to the 13th of June 1975 in Tehran, Baghdad, Algiers and Baghdad sequentially. These meetings resulted in a "Treaty concerning the State Frontier and Neighbourly Relations Between Iraq and Iran on June 13, 1975 and the Protocols Annexed Thereto."¹¹

This Treaty had a preamble, eight Articles, an Annex and three Protocols with their respective annexes and amendments concerning articles 5 and 6 and the Protocols concerning the 'demarcation of the land frontiers; the river border line; security procedures on the borders'.

This Treaty also contained four complementary agreements, which were signed on the 26 December 1975 in Baghdad and related to: the regulations on navigation in the Shatt al-Arab; the regulations concerning the rivers between the two countries; the regulation about pasturing; and the regulations about the frontier authorities.

The Treaty, its three Protocols, and four Agreements were eventually ratified by the parliaments of both countries and registered in the United Nations secretariat. (No. 14903 to 14907 dated 1976)

According to the first Article, the re-demarcation of the land border was to consist of a mixed Iraqi-Iranian-Algerian committee, operating on the basis of the Constantinople Protocol of 1913 and the minutes of the meetings of the 1914

¹⁰ For the text of the "Accord" see Appendix 7.

¹¹ For the text of the "Treaty" see Appendix 8.

Commission to delimit the Turko-Persian frontier as well as the records of the meetings of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs. The two parties agreed to assign the air transport of the demarcation teams to the Iranian Army Aviation Unit, (commanded by the present writer) and the building of the sign posts to the Iraqi Aviation Unit. For navigation and maintenance of the Shatt al-Arab they established a "Common Co-ordinating Office" to carry out all managerial duties and technical aspects necessary for the efficient running of this important waterway. The expenses incurred were to be paid by duties received from ships entering the river. It was also agreed that all ships entering the river should fly the flag of the last country in which the destination port was located, and ships leaving the river should fly the flag of the last country from which the ship has departed.

8.4 Iran-Iraq achievement in the Accord

The Algiers accord was concluded on the 6th of March 1975. Its aim was to put an end to the Iran-Iraq conflicts, which centred over two basic issues:

- A. Ending Iranian assistance to the Kurdish insurgents.
- B. Demarcation of the land and river frontiers between the two countries.

The logical outcome as envisaged by both countries was the achievement of the following objectives:

- A. Removing the danger of war between the two countries.
- B. Elimination of the tension and suspicion that was prevalent among the countries of the region.
- C. Reduction of the possibility of intervention by the superpowers in the internal affairs of the region.
- D. Maintenance of unity among the OPEC Member States.
- E. Maintenance of the balance of power between the West and the East.

Iran, who had been denied authority over Shatt al-Arab since 1847, achieved a direct and immediate advantage as a result of this treaty by establishing the "Thalweg line" in the Shatt al-Arab as the border between the two countries.

However, in the context of the historical relations between Iran-Ottoman/Iraq, four distinct periods emerge that highlight the volatility and importance of the Shatt al-Arab issue. During the first period, 1800-1920, the Shatt al-Arab was of prime importance to the British in securing access to India. Therefore, the British were reluctant to give up control over this river and through secret political arrangements with the Russians and Ottomans denied Iran the right to participate in its control. In the second period, 1920-1958, following the demise of the Ottoman and the creation of Iraq, the latter country began to act as an agent implementing British policies in the region and refused to recognise the Thalweg principle on the river border in the Shatt al-Arab. The third period, 1958-1975, was defined by Iraq's expedient 'commitment' to Arab Nationalism, which provoked animosity towards Israel and confrontation with the West. The fourth period, 1975-1979, which ended with the demise of the Pahlavi regime in Iran, was totally different from previous periods as the two countries became involved in an unwarranted, destructive and bloody war with one another that was to last for eight years.

8.5 Reactions towards the Accord

The oil states attending the OPEC Summit Conference in Algiers, considered the Algiers Accord to be a success for OPEC. The Latin American oil producing countries welcomed the Iran-Iraq endeavour for peace and stability in the region. It was also considered to be a victory for the Third World in general as the first step towards greater understanding and co-operation.

In the National Assembly of Iraq on the 17th of September 1980, Saddam Hussein described the Accord as, "a brave and wise decision at the time", before adding that, "the Algiers Accord played a great role in our country's unity and its future".¹²

The New York Times from March 1975 stated that, "The U.S.A. is not happy with the 6th March 1975 Algiers Accord between Iraq and Iran. The Agreement between the Shah and Iraq created some concern for the U.S.A. because the good relationship between Iran, Iraq and Algiers can affect the oil flow to Israel".¹³ However, these fears proved to be unfounded as Iran had guaranteed the flow of its oil to Israel as part of a secret treaty between Israel and Egypt, the negotiations of which had been chaired by Henry Kissinger.¹⁴ During the Foreign Ministers summit of CENTO, Kissinger pointed out the important role played by Iran in reaching this agreement and conveyed his government's satisfaction at the establishment of Iran and Iraq's new friendly relations.¹⁵ Iraq's willingness for better relations with America was evidenced in the signing of a number of economic contracts with American business representatives, although the poor quality of Russian technology may have been just as important a factor in influencing its decision.

Indeed, Iraq had become somewhat disillusioned with the Russians in view of latter's non-support in the efforts to suppress the Kurds as well as the sense of independence and growing confidence in the Iraqi administration arising from the huge oil revenues, which made them less dependent on external support.¹⁶ Although the Russians welcomed the Algiers Accord attempt to eradicate the causes of conflict between Iran and Iraq, it offered no real benefits to their overall strategic policy in the

¹² Khalid Al-Izzi, op. Cit., p.177.

¹³ The New York Times, (9 March, 1975).

¹⁴ For more information see, Guardian (10 October, 1975).

¹⁵ Ayandegan, (13 June, 1975).

¹⁶ Juan Onis, "Iraqi victory over Kurds seen as setback to Soviet", The New York Times, (6 April, 1975).

Middle East. The only real consequence for Russia lay in the fact that the improved relations between Iraq and Iran would reduce the Iraqi dependence on Russian armaments used against the Kurds and Iran.

The Chinese government also supported the Algiers Accord. Although they viewed the great powers engagements in the Persian Gulf with caution, they welcomed the improved relations between Iran and Iraq seeing it as providing benefits to both nations and helping to keep peace in the Persian Gulf.¹⁷

After the Algiers Accord, the differences between Iraq and Syria became more acute. Syria accused Iraq of collaborating with imperialists, giving up the Iraqi sovereignty over 14 villages to Iran,¹⁸ and furthermore denying Iraqi national rights over the Shatt al-Arab and Arabestan (the Khusestan Province).¹⁹

Kuwait, although worried about the future intention of Iraq towards the Werbeh and Bubian Islands in the north of the Persian Gulf, described the Accord as a good beginning for the future stability and security in the area.²⁰

As a means of preventing Iranian military expansionist policies in Zofar (in the South Yemen), the Yemen government welcomed this Accord, whilst the Libyan's by contrast were one of the few country's to express their disapproval of the agreement.²¹

¹⁷ The Times, (7 April, 1975).

¹⁸ Arab Report and record, (1-15 April, 1975), p.231.

¹⁹ Ibid, (16-31 May, 1975), p.308.

²⁰ Jasmin Abdulghani. M., Iraq and Iran the years of crisis, (The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1984) pp.158.

²¹ Ibid., p.155.

8.6 Willingness and motivation for the Treaty

No doubt history will mark this "Treaty" as the greatest regional achievement in the political life of the leaders of Iran and Iraq; the Shah and Saddam Hussein.

The Shah of Iran, justified the Treaty as follows, "when the Near East was on the gunpowder barrel, we were not soliciting the war". President Saddam for his part, aware of the fact that the majority of his forces were engaged in the Kurdish areas and that Iraq could therefore not afford a war with Iran, stated that, "the possibility of war between us and Iran was an imminent possibility, none of us wanted war, we chose the peace".²²

The superpowers likewise did not want war between Iraq and Iran, insisting that the two sides solve their differences in a peaceful way. As Valadani states, America even went so far as to say that "in the case of war she will not send arms to Iran".²³

Internal issues, such as regional unrest and growing middle class discontent, also provided influential motivating factors behind the Shah's decision to sign for peace. This Treaty helped the Shah to consolidate his power base and alleviate the domestic problems, at least for the time being. Furthermore, the Iraqi government's attempts to control the domestic activities of the Communists and orthodox Palestinians had influenced the Shah to deal with his own internal problems. Tareq Azziz claims, "After the Algiers Accord, the former King of Iran became suspicious about it, we then informed him if he reneges on his promise, we will ignore the Communists activities on the Iranian border. Within a week the Agreement was approved by him."²⁴

One of the other reasons behind Iraq's unprecedented acceptance of the Algiers Accord was the continuing cost of trying to suppress the Kurdish uprising in the north. Fighting with the Kurds had cost Iraq \$4 billion, which could have been spent on

²² Ibid, p.155.

²³ Valadani, op.cit, p.480.

²⁴ Ettelaat, 14 August, 1987.

economic plans and infrastructural development. Furthermore, in June 1980 Saddam disclosed, "in 1975 our Air Force was left with three bombs only, this prohibited us to continue the war with Kurds". Saddam himself, General Hassan al-Baker and the Chief of Staff were the only ones aware of this secret at the time.²⁵ The war had also taken its toll in human life with 60,000 civilian and military personnel killed during the course of the fighting. The country itself seemed on the brink of collapse as the oil field areas were dragged into the conflict and its main source of revenue came under serious threat.²⁶

Keeping the superpowers rivalries out of the Persian Gulf was another important factor that inspired both countries to press for a peace settlement. As the Shah stated, "Both of us [Shah and Saddam], want the third party out of the region".²⁷

Towards this end, Iran attempted to minimise Iraq's dependence on Russia with a view to reducing the latter's influence in the Persian Gulf. The Iraqi government, operating under the Ba'th Party Doctrine stressing Arab Unity, had no option but to comply with Iranian designs as it needed the support of the latter if it wished to achieve the leadership of the Arab Nations.

From an economic point of view, both countries were seeking bargaining power within OPEC to increase oil prices and make adjustments in oil production.

The Shah for his part had also hoped that the good relations with Iraq would inspire India to establish a South Asian Security Zone with Iran.

8.7 Iran Iraq Relations after the Treaty of 1975

Following the Treaty, relations between the two countries began to improve and in March 1976 the Prime Minister of Iran visited Iraq. During their discussions both

²⁵ Abdulghani, op.cit., pp.156-157.

²⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Iraq, The Iraqi-Iranian Conflicts Documentary Dossier, 1981, p.209.

²⁷ Christian Science Monitor, (7 May, 1975)

Prime Ministers expressed their willingness for more co-operation and friendship between the two nations.²⁸ In their joint communiqué they stated that they intended to keep the region free from any kind of foreign influences and wanted to expand their trade, economic and cultural relations. In April 1976, Saddam Hussein paid a visit to Tehran and before his departure he said, "In Tehran, the security in the Persian Gulf which is the largest oil producing region in the world, is the main issue to be discussed between me and Shah of Iran".²⁹ Common interests such as energy, raw materials and regional situations were also discussed with both leaders insisting that the application of the 1975 Treaty was the key to maintaining good neighbouring relations.³⁰

In July 1976, Saadoun Hammadi, Prime Minister of Iraq visited Tehran, followed by the Deputy Prime Minister visiting in December 1977. He described Iran-Iraq relations as, "the developing relations between Iran and Iraq are based on mutual interests and non-interference in each others internal policies, and have set a good example for neighbouring countries."³¹

Further consolidating relations between the two countries, a member of the Revolution Committee and the Interior Minister Ezzat Ebrahim al-Douri visited Iran in July 1977. During this visit five agreements were signed on issues relating to agriculture, fishing, trade, transport, tourism, energy and consulate affairs. In 1977, both countries signed an agreement allowing their airlines to operate between the two capitals. In November 1977, another agreement for the connection of both countries railways was signed³² and in February 1978, in the second ministerial meeting in Baghdad, both countries agreed to co-operate with each other in trade, transit, customs duties,

²⁸ Iranian Foreign Ministry, (some facts about Iraq), p.173.

²⁹ Ettelaat, 18 February, 1976.

³⁰ Iranian Foreign Ministry, op.cit., pp. 176-177.

³¹ Abdulghani, op.cit., p.165.

³² Ibid., p.165.

transportation, communications, tourism, pilgrims, industry, geology and gas exploration.

From a strategic point of view, both countries tried to keep the superpower rivalries out of the Persian Gulf, and to operate a unified policy in conducting their external affairs, as seen in their joint support, along with Saudi Arabia, of Somalian efforts in the war against Marxist Ethiopia in the Horn of Africa.³³ Within the framework of OPEC, Iran and Iraq, in contrast to Saudi Arabia, favoured a gradual rise in oil prices. The differences between these countries surfaced at the OPEC Summit in December 1977, during which Saudi Arabia wanted to see a 5% rise in oil prices but Iran and Iraq both pressed for a 10% increase. Iran accused the Saudi Arabian Oil Minister of damaging OPEC members interests and helping the multi-national companies.³⁴ The Keyhan newspaper stated, "Saudi Arabia declared war on OPEC", and in the same tone the Shah of Iran tacitly complained about Saudi Arabia, and said, "the two price regimes caused Iranian oil production to be significantly reduced and inflicted \$7 billion worth of damages on Iran revenues".

The rise of socialist regimes in Afghanistan in March 1978 and in South Yemen in June 1978, caused great concern in Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, inspiring them towards greater co-operation in order to maintain the security of the Persian Gulf. However, when seven Arab countries in the Persian Gulf decided to establish the 'Arabian Gulf News Broadcasting Institute', Iran became annoyed and recalled her Ambassadors from those countries. Although Iran and Iraq were both concerned about security in the Persian Gulf their approaches to the matter were quite different. Iraq sought to pursue a policy of mutual security agreement whilst Iran preferred the use of

³³ Arab Report and Record, (15-28 February, 1978), p.139 and (1-15 August, 1977), p.637, and Ibid., (15-28 February, 1978), pp.127 and 139.

³⁴ Business Week, (8 January, 1977); and Abdulghani, op.cit., p.167.

collective security pacts. However, circumstances and conditions were soon to change, with the fall of the Pahlavi Regime and the isolation of Egypt following the Camp David Agreement creating a power vacuum in the area, which Saddam sought to fill.

8.8 Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran

With the demise of the Pahlavi Regime, relations between Iraq and Iran entered a new era. The Ba'th Party became concerned and anxious about the intentions of the new regime in Iran, with one of the Party officials announcing that, "Iraq is not satisfied with the change in regime in Iran."³⁵ This was the reason we asked for the Revolution Leader of Iran to leave Iraq."³⁶

After the Revolution in Iran, control of the borders between the two countries became extremely difficult. Iran proposed the "Simorgh" plan – a kind of mutual co-ordination for border control – as a means of resolving the current dispute. Meanwhile, during 1979 Iran had sent 80 maps to Iraq to be completed with the names of villages and features located within their claimed territorial area. The Iraqi government for its part failed to respond to these requests. The Revolution Committee of Iran in a bid to ease the situation announced that Iraqi dissidents located in Iran were not recognised by the Iranian government. In spite of these steps taken by Iran, the border clashes began to increase and the Iraqi Air Force started bombing Iranian towns and villages leading to a flood of protests. The Iraqi Ambassador in Tehran formally expressed his regret at the loss of life and the Iraqi government announced its readiness to compensate for the damage inflicted by the air force.³⁷

³⁵ Dilip Hiro, *Iran under the Ayatollah*, (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul plc, 1985) pp.165-166.

³⁶ Keyhan, 1 November, 1980.

³⁷ Keyhan, 16 July, 1980.

Further diplomatic gestures were undertaken by Iran in a bid to settle the differences peacefully. In 1980, during the non-allied countries conference in Havana, the Iranian Foreign Minister visited Saddam and asked for the full implementation of the 1975 Treaty and its protocol concerning security on the borders. He also expressed his wish for trade and economic expansion between the two countries and for more co-operation in order guarantee security in the Persian Gulf as well as inviting Saddam to visit Iran.³⁸

In September 1979 Iraq drilled 50 oil wells along the border in a bid to extract more oil from those sources equally owned by both countries. This was followed by an assassination attempt on the Iranian Foreign Minister in Kuwait, which Iran accused Iraq of carrying out. The recriminations continued with Iraq accusing Iran of being behind the killing of a government minister in Baghdad.

However, in 1980 relations between the two countries became so strained that in June both countries recalled their Ambassadors. Iraq started to negotiate openly with the former Prime Minister of Iran, Dr. Shahpour-e-Bakhtiar and General Ghasim Oveissi, the former Iranian Ground Force commanding officer, in an effort to undermine the Iranian government.

According to the Iraqi's, the Iranian authorities, especially its religious members, were openly undermining Iraq's internal stability by inciting the Iraqi people to rise up against the government and declare an Islamic state. Iraq reported these claims to the U.N. Secretary General asking him to force Iran to stop its unlawful broadcasts and publications.

The situation in Iran at this time was one of uncertainty, with two separate government forces seeking to take control of power. The provisional government led by Bazorgan represented the formal face of government, whilst the informal government led

³⁸ Ettelaat, 26 September, 1980.

by Ayatollah Khomeini represented the real source of power. Bazorgan on being informed of the unlawful behaviour of the informal power grouping advised them to refrain from their activities and to set a good example instead. This he felt would be more beneficial for the revolution in the long run than seeking to undermine neighbouring country's system of government.³⁹

In fact, this episode merely serves to highlight the dilemma of this last 20 years of Iran's political history. As Asghar Schirazi explained, "The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran is full of contradictions... ", he continued, "Among many contradictions to emerge from this process, two are fundamental and have had a decisive impact on the development of the Iranian state since the revolution". The first contradiction, he explains, is between the Islamic loyalist and non-Islamic secular elements and the second one is the contradiction between the democratic and anti-democratic elements, arising chiefly from the conflict between the two notions of sovereignty embodied in the document ...⁴⁰

The formal government relates itself to the non-Islamic and the democratic elements of institution and the informal government relates to the Islamic loyalist and anti-democratic elements of it.

However, on the 17th of September 1980 the 1975 Treaty between Iraq and Iran was annulled by Saddam Hussein, and five days later Iraqi forces invaded Iran from land, air and sea.

³⁹ Bazorgan, M. (Enghelab Dar Do. Harekat, Amir Kahir, 1980). (Revolution in two directions).
⁴⁰ Asghar-e-Schirazi, *The Constitution of Iran, Politics and the State in the Islamic Republic*,
Translated by John O'Kane, (I.B. Taurus, London, 1997), p.1.

8.9 The Fate of the Treaty since the Ceasefire

U.N. Resolution 598 declared on the 20th of July 1987 urged Iran and Iraq to agree on a permanent ceasefire.⁴¹ The following year on the 17th of July 1988 Iran officially accepted the terms of the Resolution. Thereafter the eight years war between Iran and Iraq ended with both sides agreeing to observe the cease-fire. Shortly afterwards, under U.N. supervision, negotiations began in an attempt to achieve a lasting peace settlement. At Iran's insistence and in light of the international circumstances, Iraq once again accepted the terms of the 1975 Algiers Agreement and agreed to evacuate all its armed forces from Iranian occupied territory. The negotiations included the release of prisoners of war, the investigation of the aggressor and the assessment of damages inflicted on Iran.

U.N. Resolution 598 has one preamble and 10 Articles. Article one called for an immediate cease-fire and withdrawal of forces to the international borders. The second Article urges the U.N. Secretary General to dispatch observers to the border area for the purpose of monitoring and observing the cease-fire and the withdrawal of forces. In accordance with the Geneva Convention of 12th October 1949, the third Article called for the immediate release of all prisoners of war. The fourth Article of the Resolution asked Iran and Iraq to co-operate with the U.N. Secretary General towards the establishment of a permanent, fair and honourable agreement between the two parties. Article five prohibited both sides from any action that could cause new animosity. Article six asked the U.N. Secretary General to communicate with the two countries for designation of an impartial committee of experts to specify the aggressor of the war. Article eight refers to the security and stability of the region. In Article nine the U.N. Secretary General is held responsible for continuous reports on the progress made towards U.N. Resolution 598's

⁴¹ For details of the Resolution see Appendix 9.

application. To ensure the application of the Resolution the Security Council committed itself to convening sessions concerned with the above issues.

A. The Cease-fire processes

The cease-fire between the two countries started on the 20th of October 1988 and the U.N. Security Council ratified Resolution 619 allowing the despatch of a 400 man strong unit of 25 different nationalities to monitor the cease-fire. The detailed functions of this force included:

- (1) consolidating and observing the cease-fire;
- (2) observing the withdrawal of the armed forces;
- (3) helping both sides to solve their local problems on issues such as demarcation of border lines
- (4) helping both sides to establish a buffer zone on the border line.

B. Beginning the negotiations

Negotiations between Iraq and Iran started on the 17th of August 1988. The Iraqi government forwarded the dredging of the Shatt al-Arab and free navigation in the Persian Gulf as preconditions to the beginning of discussions. The Western countries supported Iraq on the demand for free navigation in the Persian Gulf, however Iran failed to accept these preconditions and negotiations failed. One month later the U.N. Secretary General proposed a plan with four articles in which the Iraqi preconditions were included. The Iranians rejected the plan citing the Iraqi preconditions once again as being totally unacceptable.

In 1989 Iran asked for the simultaneous withdrawal of forces and the release of prisoners of war. Iraq refused relating the withdrawal of forces with the issue of her sovereignty over Shatt al-Arab.

The position taken by Iraq in the course of the negotiations was widely supported by the other Arab nations at the 1989 Arab Conference in Morocco.⁴² As Valadani believes, this support was based more on the fact that Western countries were in favour of free navigation in the Persian Gulf than any great show of Arab unity. Other countries, most notably Russia, tried but failed to intermediate between Iran and Iraq on the basis of U.N. Resolution 598.

The changing international conditions had resulted in such an improvement in relations between Iraq and the West, especially the U.S.A., that the U.N. Security Council wanted the U.N. Secretary General to renegotiate with Iran and Iraq concerning the implementation of U.N. Resolution 598. Towards this end an agenda with 8 clauses that included the views from both sides was introduced in a bid to start negotiations. Iran and Iraq accepted the new proposal in principle, but face to face negotiations and concrete steps forward still proved remarkably difficult to achieve.

C. The new move by Saddam Hussein

On the 21st of April 1990, President Saddam Hussein, in a surprising move, wrote a letter to the Iranian authorities and asked for direct negotiation between the two countries Heads of State. The reason behind this sudden request lay in the fact that Saddam needed his forces for a deployment along the border with Kuwait and therefore sought a quick resolution to the problems with Iran. Iran welcomed these proposed negotiations provided their agenda was to be within the framework of U.N. Resolution 598. Following further correspondence between the two Presidents Iraq once again reiterated its desire for direct talks between the two countries in a letter dated the 20th of May 1990. This time Iran refused having changed her position because of the resolution of the Arab Summit in Baghdad in May 1990, which again supported the previous claims of Iraq towards Shatt al-Arab and the Persian Gulf.

⁴²

Valadani, op.cit., p.10.

However, this exchange of letters had prepared the ground for direct talks to take place between the two Foreign Ministers. The first round of meetings began in July 1990 in the presence of the U.N. Secretary General. The implementation of U.N. Resolution 598 was accepted as the basis for discussions but both sides tried to avoid the controversial issues, relying on the role of the U.N. Secretary General to act as intermediary.

On the 30th of July 1990 the Iraqi government, in a letter to their counterpart in Iran, changed their long standing position with regard to the Shatt al-Arab and asked for a new round of negotiations based on the following points

- (1) Because of her historical right over Shatt al-Arab, sovereignty on this river remains with Iraq;
- (2) Iraq exercised her sovereignty over Shatt al-Arab under the Thalweg principle;
- (3) In a framework accepted by both sides the decision of an impartial referee on the Shatt al-Arab issue was to be final for both parties.

The letter also stated that Iraq wanted the Shatt al-Arab to be dredged, the withdrawal of forces and the release of prisoners of war, to be completed within two months time.

However, three days later Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait. Iran condemned the action and asked for the immediate withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Iranian territory.

D. Iraq accepts the 1975 Algiers Agreement

On the 14th of August 1990, Baghdad radio suspended its normal broadcasts and read the text of a letter from Saddam Hussein to the Iranian President in which the former agreed to accept the terms of the 1975 Algiers Agreement. A series of official visits then took place between the two countries culminating in the Iraqi Foreign

Minister Tareq Azziz's trip to Iran, which resulted in the following issues being negotiated:

- (1) immediate erection of border signposts;
- (2) release of Prisoners of War;
- (3) Persian Gulf crisis;
- (4) provisions for pilgrims to sacred places;
- (5) opening the Embassies

Before leaving Tehran, Azziz described his negotiations as positive and serious, but except for the opening of the Embassies nothing else followed.⁴³ However, this visit paved the way for dialogue as a means for the possible normalisation of relations. It is important to mention here that some Western governments had become increasingly concerned about the developing relations between Iran and Iraq. They claimed that Iran was ignoring the U.N. Resolution regarding the imposition of economic sanctions on Iraq by allowing Iraq to channel its oil to market through Iran and by receiving Iraqi oil as war reparations payments.⁴⁴ However, in a bid to convince these countries of its honourable intentions Iran announced that her peace negotiations with Iraq was utterly separate from the Gulf crisis and strictly in accordance with the framework provided by U.N. Resolution 598.

In order to proceed with the implementation of the issues raised during Tareq Azziz's visit to Tehran, the Deputy Ministers of both countries visited each other in their respective capitals. They decided to establish Committees with the responsibility to look after issues such as: erecting border signposts; releasing prisoners of war; and for pilgrims visiting sacred places. Although these meetings were steps forward in

⁴³ Ettelaat, 21 September, 1990.

⁴⁴ Jumhuri-e-Eslamy, 30 October, 1990.

achieving the normalisation of relations they did little to solve the most important and pressing issue, border demarcation.

In November 1990, the Iranian Foreign Minister visited Iraq. In an interview he referred to the progress being made towards the release of the prisoners of war and the issue of the pilgrims, but was silent and non-committal about the dredging of Shatt al-Arab and the demarcation of the borders.

A few days before the Western Allies ultimatum expired, the Iraqi envoy Ezzat Ebrahim visited Tehran. In his speech in Moshhad, the provincial capital of Khorasan, he said, "the believers of Islam should stick to the deep rooted principle of Islam to eradicate the imperialist domination." He added, "the Islamic leaders should frustrate imperialism with clear design in mind," and in regard to relations with Iran said, "both leaders of our countries, hope that the strategic co-ordination between them on the basis of security and cultural relation will be continued."⁴⁵

In Iran, certain sections of the population were voicing their support for Iraq in what they saw as its fight against imperialist infidels. However, the Iranian government decided to take a more neutral and egalitarian line by condemning both the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the presence of the foreign forces in the region.

E. The turbulent relations

A few days after the Iraqi delegation's departure, the allies started to bombard Iraq from air and sea. Iraq was eventually defeated and an internal uprising seemed imminent. Saddam Hussein in his speech, and without mentioning the name of Iran, said, "we were not expecting our neighbour, which offered cordial friendship, to forget the animosity for better relations and undermine our internal stability."⁴⁶ Iraq claimed Iranian armed forces had crossed the international borders invading her territory and at

⁴⁵ Ettelaat, 30 January, 1991.

⁴⁶ Ressalat, 30th October, 1991.

the same time was providing financial and military support to rebels fighting Iraq forces. From February to mid August 1991 more than 80 clashes between the forces of the two countries were recorded with both sides accusing each other of breaking the cease-fire.

Further controversy was caused between the two countries over the entrustment to Iran of the responsibility for returning those Iraqi aircraft that had escaped Allied destruction during the course of the conflict. The Iraqis stated that 148 aircraft were due for return but Iran claimed to have received only 22 aircraft and subjected their return to U.N. approval, the undertaking of which has yet to materialise.

In September 1991, the Deputy Foreign Minister of Iraq paid a visit to Tehran to discuss certain issues concerning the U.N. Resolution 598. However, in the atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion progress proved impossible.

8.10 Iraq guilty of war

In August 1991, the U.N. Secretary General asked Iran and Iraq to consider the issue, as to who should be apportioned the blame for starting the conflict on the 22nd of September 1980. During his visit in Tehran, the U.N. Secretary General said, "I believe the inquiry about the responsible country of conflict should be assigned to an impartial expert team which can take all the views on board."⁴⁷ On the 28th of September 1991, after receiving submissions from both sides and submitting them to a team of expert judges, the U.N. Secretary General formally announced Iraq as the aggressor responsible for instigating the war. In a letter on the 14th of August 1991, he wrote to President Saddam Hussein, 'this is a fact that the Iraqi explanations are not sufficient and acceptable. Therefore the 22nd of September 1980 invasion of Iran is clearly against the U.N. Charter and the basic international ethic. Even if there has been violations

⁴⁷

Keyhan, 29 December, 1991.

committed by Iran against Iraq, these violations could not legitimise Iraq to start an open war against that country. The act of violation against any country is against international law."⁴⁸

After almost 11 years, the U.N. had finally held Iraq responsible for invading Iran. However, a number of factors in the international political climate at the time were influential in helping the U.N. Secretary General to arrive at this decision. Firstly, the U.N. had to maintain a consistency of approach, and its response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait could not be seen to be different to Iraq invading Iran. In the second instance, most international leaders who had condemned Iraq for invading Kuwait, pushed aside their political considerations and convictions to further accuse Iraq of having previously invaded Iran. Thirdly, the partial improvement in relations between Iran and the Western countries, especially the U.S.A., had also been an influencing factor in accepting the Iranian position.

Another barrier to achieving normal relations between Western countries and Iran was the hostage crisis in Lebanon.⁴⁹ As Keyhan disclosed, "before holding Iraq responsible for resorting to force, the U.N. Secretary General had reached an agreement with Iran where the latter would offer its services in helping to free Western hostages held in Lebanon".⁵⁰ Although Iranian authorities denied any connection with the hostage taking in Lebanon, the existence of an agreement between Iran and the U.N. Secretary General, as stated by Kayhan, followed by the immediate release of a number of hostages, would seem to prove their assertions to the contrary.

⁴⁸ Keyhan, 29 December, 1991.

⁴⁹ President Bush in his interview with newspapers has said, "America is willing to have good relations with Iran, provided the hostages in Lebanon are freed." *Abror*, 23 October, 1991.

⁵⁰ Keyhan, 30 September, 1991.

8.10.1 The war damages assessment⁵¹

The U.N. Security Council issued two Resolutions (598 and 687) insisting that Iraq should pay the full cost of the war damages it had inflicted on both Iran and Kuwait. By February 1991 the Security Council had received the report on the damages to Kuwait and in a bid to avoid accusations of double standards they dispatched a team of experts to Iran in June 1991 to assess the extent of war damages there. In August they visited Iran again and calculated the final costs of the direct and indirect damages to stand at \$9712 million and 34535 billion rials (\$6 billion) respectively. According to Kamran-e-Mofid, the war has inflicted \$644.3 and \$452.6 billion in physical damages to the economic infrastructures of Iran and Iraq.⁵² However, Iran had estimated the cost of the damages to her economic infrastructure to amount to a figure of \$1,000 billion. The U.N. assessment team called for international round table negotiations to help Iran in recovering the damages.

This move by the U.N. Secretary General was condemned by Iraq who accused the U.N. of singling out Article 7 from the content of Resolution 598 and thereby acting against the spirit of the agreement.⁵³ The Iraqi Foreign Minister implicitly questioned the U.N. Secretary General and complained, "except for the Article concerning the cease-fire, it is not appropriate to implement some Articles and neglect the other Articles of the Resolution".⁵⁴

8.11 The arrears issues

For the time being Iraq accepts the 1975 Algiers Agreement, its forces have withdrawn to the international borders and the release of prisoners of war is almost completed, but there are still a number of unattended issues to be dealt with.

⁵¹ For the text of U.N. Resolution 598 see Appendix 9.

⁵² Mofid, op.cit., p.139.

⁵³ Jumhuri-e-Eslamy, 5th August, 1991.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 5th August, 1991.

(1) The erection of border sign posts.

The 1975 Treaty specified the borders on the map, but the demarcation of these borders on the ground involves a practicality, willingness, honesty and commitment among the concerned parties to physically implement these proposals and make them a reality. A committee of experts was assigned to the task, but after two preliminary sessions the process stopped. According to Valadani, "the Kuwait crisis was the Iraqi excuse to stop the co-ordination with its Iranian counterpart," but he added, "Iraq likes to postpone the demarcation processes intentionally using it as a tool for its future expansionist policies. This was the case in the 1980 annulment of the 1975 Treaty, on the grounds that the previous regime in Iran had not agreed to move the 21 signposts to their original location."⁵⁵

(2) The absence of a peace agreement.

Although a lengthy cease-fire was conceived as a "de facto" peace between the two belligerents the absence of a signed peace agreement means that a lawful peace and an end to the state of war still does not exist. Article 4 of U.N. Resolution 598 calls for the establishment of a stable, honourable and permanent peace between Iran and Iraq. Since the peace agreement between Iran and Iraq is not signed inertia exists where a state of "neither peace nor war" prevails. The seriousness of this problem is evidenced by the fact that during the cease-fire many clashes occurred between the two sides, which in turn given time could cause another open war.

(3) Dredging the Shatt al-Arab River.

Because of mud repletion, sunken boats and floating mines, the Shatt al-Arab River is un-navigable. The cost of dredging this river is estimated to be somewhere between 5 and 10 billion dollars. Iraq placed a high priority on dredging the Shatt al-Arab because this river gives it easy access to the Persian Gulf. The 1975 Treaty states that the dredging of the river is to be undertaken within the framework of the "Co-ordinating Office" functions. Therefore the first step in this process would be to organise the establishment of such an office, a step which has so far not yet taken place.

⁵⁵ Valadani, op.cit., p.29.

(4) Demarcation of the sea bed.

The demarcation of the seabed in the Persian Gulf, which is not mentioned in the 1975 Treaty, has also failed to be implemented. In 1953 and 1955 this issue was discussed between the two countries without any firm outcome being achieved. However, since the demarcation of the seabed in the northern part of the Persian Gulf involves three countries - Iran, Kuwait and Iraq - co-ordinated efforts are essential if the project is to be successful. This is somewhat problematic given the present difficulty that exists between Iraq and Kuwait.

8.12 Conclusion

As mentioned previously, the Algiers Treaty was an event of huge regional significance in that it succeeded in establishing a permanent and lasting peace between the two major countries in the Middle East after almost 500 years of conflict and bloodshed. However, the Algiers Treaty was soon to be overtaken by events, most notably the Iranian revolution of 1979 and the eight years of war between Iran and Iraq, which swept away all hopes for a peaceful future. These developments amounted to a disastrous failure not only for the two countries involved but also for the entire stability of the Middle East.

Once again the internal and regional political, social and economic developments in the Middle East have ended in failure. Indeed the present situations in both Iran and Iraq offer little hope for optimism. Both governments are relying on the rule of force in denying their people access to democratic institutions and the right to influence the political, social and economic processes in their countries. These factors leave both countries facing uncertain and unstable futures, which brings with it the possibility of renewed violence.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

9.1 General

From the first treaty in 1555 to the signing of the Algiers Accord on the 6th of March 1975, there have been eighteen, largely unsatisfactory and unsuccessful, protocols established in a bid to achieve a lasting and permanent peace between Ottoman/Iraq and Iran.

In the first period of conflict, 1514-1800, relations between the two Empires (Ottoman and Safavid) were essentially dictated by a complex overlay of nationalist aspirations, religious beliefs and motivations, expansionist and opportunistic invasions. All of these factors served as reflections of the regional political, social and economic developments these societies were undergoing at the time (Chapter 2).

For the British, protection of their interests in India from the threat of counter national interests and foreign invasion became the issue of paramount concern guiding her activities in the Middle East. These strategic intrusions, along with those from other European powers most notably Russia and France, came in various forms of domination (Chapter 3), and influence (Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7). The issue of self-interest thus became the defining principle in European relations between Ottoman/Iraq and Iran.

However, with the end of the nineteenth and the coming of the twentieth century historical and political relations began to change dramatically. Universalist and divisive secular ideologies, and the technologies of mass production and consumption, were the main elements responsible for this restructuring of world politics. These processes established America and Russia as the worlds two great superpowers and subsequently

dragged them into the social, political and economic developments of the region. The former was seen as the model and champion of materialistic capitalism, whilst the latter underwent a process that transformed the country from absolutist Tsarism, to totalitarian Marxism, before being subsumed by capitalism.

Analysis of these developments in the Middle East and Europe can be divided into two parts containing four distinct periods. During the first part (1514-1800, first period), the regional factors are seen as the main causes of conflicts and the investigation of these causes addresses the first question of the study: the reasons for conflict.

In the second part, 1800-2000, three distinctive periods can be clearly identified. During the second period (1800-1920) the external powers are the key players dominating and manipulating regional developments in the Middle East but without affecting any structural changes in the political and social institutions of the region. In the third period (1920-1945), following the demise of the Ottoman Empire (1920), these external powers sought to replicate their own political, social and economic institutions in the societies of the Middle East. This in turn influenced internal developments in the region. The fourth period, 1945 to the present, is marked by the super power rivalries that dominated the course of international politics. The effects of external interventions on the social, political and economic developments of the Middle East caused the present asymmetrical relations between this region and the west. The ways by which these relations were established constituted the second research question of this study.

9.2 The boundaries question and foreign intrusions

Previous to the establishment of the Ottoman Empire, Iraq had been a part of Iran for centuries. In 1472 the Ottoman occupied Iraq and by doing so initiated the start

of what was to be a centuries long dispute. During the period 1514-1980, there were twenty five major conflicts between Iran and its western neighbours, of which one was with Iraq (1980) and the rest with the Ottoman, (7 in the 16th, 9 in the 17th, 7 in the 18th and 1 in the 19th centuries). By the beginning of the 19th century the two Empires were beginning to crumble and the last war between them occurred in 1921-23. Most of these conflicts arose as a result of Ottoman expansionist policies. The Iranians for their part engaged in invasion with the sole intention of regaining territories lost to Ottoman. The Zohab Treaty (1639) was the first Treaty in which the word "Boundary" was introduced. The agreed "Boundary" was a 40 to 20 mile wide zone between them over which neither had sovereignty. This Treaty played an important role in all future boundary treaties.

However, this Treaty, the Kordan (1746), First Erzerum (1823), Second Erzerum (1847) Treaties, the Istanbul Protocol (1913), the 1937 Boundary Treaty, and finally the Algiers Agreement in 1975, were the most important agreements established between the two countries over the course of 500 years of conflict.

In the beginning of the 16th century, the Europeans were looking for new access to re-establish their trade with Asia and the East, after the Turks had cut off their previous route in the Eastern Mediterranean region. The European powers had become alarmed by the Ottoman expansion of its western wing into Europe and in an effort to halt these encroachments they began to support Iran in their struggle against the Turks. In the 1620s the British, with the help of Shah Abbass, pushed the Portuguese and Spaniards out of the southern part of Iran. This heralded the beginning of the European intrusion into the region, which from the 19th century onwards would become more direct as a result of British and Russians strategic policy designs.

In the East the British began a process of intimidating the Iranian government, through the presence of their naval power in the Persian Gulf and Shatt al-Arab, bribery, threats and uncompromising treaties, which eventually forced Iran to relinquish Afghanistan and Boluchestan, thus, securing India from future intrusions. In the north of the country Iran became involved in a number of costly and unequal wars, often fuelled by Russian conspiracies, which saw it lose a lot of its territories both to the East and West of the Caspian Sea. The British used Iran as a political bargaining tool in seeking to halt Russian designs on India. In the beginning of the 20th century the British and Russians divided Iran into two spheres of influence that formally undermined Iranian sovereignty (the 1907 and 1915 Treaties). However, the 1917 Soviet Revolution, which dissolved all previous imperialist Russian Treaties, was to rescue Iran from complete subjugation and to keep some form of independence alive.

In the West, the British played politics with Russia, by ridiculing its authorities in the Crimean War and defeating the Russian forces which were moving into the Ottoman territories and threatening British interests in Mesopotamia and her free passage through Ottoman waters. The Russians for their part were inciting hostilities between Iran and the Ottoman in order to weaken the two countries. Furthermore, it wished to ameliorate Iran from its humiliation in the war with Russia and to prepare the ground for her future expansionist policies. However, these policies proved incompatible with those of the British who were supporting the Ottoman to prevent what they saw as the eventual Russian intrusion into the area. In the end the Russian policy proved to be the more successful and in 1821 a two year long war broke out between Iran and the Ottoman. Iranian forces succeeded in occupying most of Mesopotamia and had surrounded Baghdad for 8 months, but in 1823 both sides decided to negotiate for peace. The negotiations led to the signing of the First Erzerum

Treaty, by which Iran relinquished her occupation of all Ottoman territory and agreed to withdraw her troops to the area stipulated in the Kordan Treaty.

However, the First Erzerum Treaty did not solve all the outstanding issues between the two countries and the boundary problems remained. This latter problem had been a contentious issue for some time till the 1975 Algiers accord.

In 1837, when Muhammed Shah was surrounding Herat, Ali Reza Pasha of Ottoman, helped by Kuwaiti forces and inspired by the British, occupied the Muhammara and massacred its inhabitants. When Iran complained, the Ottoman responded harshly and claimed that "Muhammara region is our land, we decided to punish our subjects". The British envoy in the area wrote, "Iran should prove its sovereignty first, and then negotiate about this event". This was the first time that Britain and the Ottoman had denied Iranian sovereignty over Muhammara. Sir Denis Wright, the former British Ambassador in Tehran wrote, "in the Qajar period, there can't be found any report in which there is not a hint of the British role concerning the border issues". By the beginning of the 19th century, the British had successfully eradicated the influences of the Portuguese, Spanish and French from the Persian Gulf. However, Russia was to remain as the main threat to the British interests in the region. This arose from the fact that Russia wanted to have port facilities in the Persian Gulf, control over Istanbul and the area surrounding Muhammara and to establish an oil pipe line to the Persian Gulf. The wars with Iran were the means by which they hoped to achieve these aims whilst at the same time undermining the British position in the area. Thus, worried about Russia's expansionist policies, the British authorities wanted the conflicts between Iran and Ottoman to end in an effort to avoid unwanted Russian interference. The Russians, having reached the Black Sea and Caucasia region, and with the Crimean War still fresh in the memory, sought British co-operation rather than conflict in the region.

This prepared the ground for the two powers to act as mediators in settling the dispute between Iran and the Ottoman. The Second Erzerum Treaty (1847) was the outcome of four years tough negotiation between the Iranian and Ottoman delegations. The British and Russian participants in the negotiations, despite not having the right to vote, made their tacit influences clear.

The foreign powers, having sided with the Ottoman, started to manipulate the text of the Treaty before the respective governments had signed it. During the negotiations, the Ottoman had tried to expand its sovereignty to Muhammara. However, these designs proved unsuccessful as a result of the well founded historical reasoning and strong resistance from the head of the Iranian delegation Amir Kabir.

Fifty two days before the Treaty was due to be signed, the Ottoman government, in conspiracy with the Russia and British Ambassadors in Istanbul, sent a letter to the British and Russian Embassies raising some questions regarding what they saw as certain ambiguities contained within the text of the Treaty. These Ambassadors replied in favour of the Ottoman government, recognising the latter's claim to sovereignty over the area surrounding Muhammara.

The Iranian envoy Mr. Muhammed Ali Khan, who happened to travelling through Istanbul on his way back to Iran from Paris, and according to reliable sources was a "Freemason", was supposed to "Exchange the Instrument of the Treaty" to be ratified by the Iranian authorities in Tehran. The British and Russian Ambassadors made certain threats and offered Khan a series of bribes in a bid to get him to sign an "Explanatory Note", which contained the materials recognising the Ottomans sovereignty claim.

As chapter two explained, this "Explanatory Note", which was immediately and formally rejected by the Iranian government, sowed the seeds of the next 150 years of mistrust between Iran and Ottoman/Iraq. This "Note" also allowed the Ottoman to claim sovereignty over the Shatt al-Arab, which complied with British desires to control the traffic on that river and to secure the shortest access route to the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean. The "Note" was also held up as an authentic part of the Treaty in the Ottomans dismissal of Iraq as a British dependency. As chapter two shows, Muhammed Ali Khan was only an envoy with a clear mission to "Exchange the Instruments of the Treaty". According to the international law of Treaties, his acceptance and signature of the "Note" held no legal basis for the Ottoman, and succeeding Iraqi governments, to claim sovereignty over the area surrounding Muhammara.

The second Erzerum Treaty is one of the last important events in Iranian and Ottoman relations but was to come to play a crucial role in future relations between Iran and Iraq. According to the second Article of the Treaty, Iran relinquished her claims on the Suleimania Province and City, and the Ottoman recognised the sovereignty of Iran over the area East of Zohab, Muhammara, Abadan, and all other areas located on the east side of the Shatt al-Arab, as well as guaranteeing free navigation of Iranian vessels on this river, as had been routine for centuries. The following two statements provide good examples of the persistent meddling of foreign powers in the internal affairs of the region. Sir Arnold Wilson, the British representative at the Second Erzerum Treaty negotiations said, "the Second Erzerum Treaty pushed aside all the border problems between Iran and Ottoman ..." (Arnold Wilson, p.269). However, following the manipulations of the Treaty, Mr. Shiel, the then British High Commissioner in Tehran,

wrote to Lord Cooly, "as long as the British are supporting Ottoman the Iranians are not able to do anything against the Ottoman desire ..." (Adamiyat, p.153).

In reality it was to take almost 70 years to fully implement the terms of the Treaty. According to Article 2 of the Treaty, a Commission composed of Iranian, Ottoman, Russian and British representatives was to be assigned the task of demarcating the borders between the two countries. The work continued from 1850 to 1852, but the Crimean War (1856-7) interrupted the demarcation process. The second demarcation process began in 1875, but the Balkan War (1876-8) was to interrupt the undertaking this time.

The Second Erzerum Treaty had failed to resolve the Iran-Ottoman differences, but had succeeded in improving the positions of Russia and Britain in the region. The two imperialist powers, by implanting the said "Note" into the Treaty were able to manipulate and manage the crisis and use it as an excuse to interfere in the internal affairs of the region in pursuit of their own strategies. Lord Curzon said, "Iran was one of the chess-men in the international chess board, with which we were playing to dominate the world." (Lord Curzon, Vol.1. p.24).

At the beginning of the 20th century, two new factors emerged that were to have a dramatic effect on Iran-Ottoman relations: German expansionist policies in the Middle East, and oil exploration in the region. As already mentioned, the 1907 Russian and British Treaty, by which Iran was divided into two spheres of influence, was their strategy to control the German influence in the Middle East and to resist any concession being given to Germany. Under these circumstances the Ottoman and Iranian authorities decided to negotiate their differences, culminating in the signing of the 1911 Protocol, which can be seen as a regional response to these international developments.

This Protocol contains a number of important points of note; any differences that arise between the two countries should be referred to the International Court of Appeal in the Hague; military occupation does not imply legitimacy of possession; no intermediary body was allowed to interfere in relations between the two countries.

In spite of these declarations, the British and Russian representatives continued to participate in the Commission for demarcation, and ignoring Iranian resentment, they forced Iran to accept the contents of the "Explanatory Note", and finally, on the 4th of November, the 1913 Protocol. In 1914 the minutes of the meetings concerning the frontier lines were signed.

The Constantinople Protocol of the 4th of November 1913 played a major role in influencing both the Boundary Treaty of July 1937, and the Algiers Accord of March 1975. For two years prior to the establishment of the Protocol, Russian and British officials had been engaged in secret correspondence with the Ottoman government unbeknownst to the Iranian delegation (Parsadust, pp.234-39). In fact, on the 29th of July 1913, in the absence of the Iranian representatives, a declaration was signed in London by representatives from Russia, Britain and the Ottoman Empire, concerning the demarcation of the southern boundary between Persia and Turkey. As a result of subsequent negotiations, the four plenipotentiaries from Britain, Russia, Persia and Turkey, managed to reach agreement on all outstanding details and other uncertain matters.

There are two points in this Protocol which highlight the influence and interference of the two great powers in relations between Iran and the Ottoman Empire. First, in Article 7 of the Protocol, the concession given to D'Arcy in 1901 by Iran, remains in full throughout the territories transferred by Persia to Turkey. Furthermore, according to Article 3, in case of any divergence of opinion in the Commission as to the

boundary line, the Russian and British Commissioners decision shall be regarded as binding on all four governments.

However, the Constantinople Treaty was never ratified by either the Iranian or Ottoman legislators. The Second World War further interrupted the demarcation process. Following the end of the war the victorious powers divided up the Ottoman lands. The Iranian delegation at the Peace Conference in Paris failed in their attempts to regain the land that they had been forced to transfer to the Ottoman under duress. Lord Curzon, the then British Foreign Minister, denied the historical sovereignty of Iran over the land that had been transferred to the Ottoman under the terms of the Constantinople Treaty, (Curzon to Sir Percy Sykes in Tehran, 13th November, 1919.S/139). In the same letter he wrote, "the Conference does not waste time on the baseless claims of a country which has kept her neutrality during the war". He continued, "I always believed, if any changes in the Iranian border have to be made in future, it would be in the Kurdish area between Iran and Ottoman". When, in 1913, the British took over the management of the Shatt al-Arab from the Ottoman, its strategy to control access and the transport of goods to and from the Persian Gulf and India, was finally realised.

After the dependency period, Iraq continued to hold the same position on the Shatt al-Arab issues as the Ottoman did. The British government willingly agreed to remove the barrier of Iraqi claims and to guarantee Iran fair settlement in any future disputes, provided Iran recognised Iraq as an independent state. Although Iran accepted the British proposal in 1929, there was no move on the part of Iraq or the British to fulfil their side of the bargain. In spite of Nuri Said and King Faizal visiting Tehran, no progress was made. The border clashes continued, with Iraq voicing its concern over these developments to the League of Nations on the 29th of July 1934. However, under British and Russian pressure, Iran accepted the Nuri Said proposal recognising Iranian sovereignty over 5 kilometres of the Shatt al-Arab near Abadan. On the 4th of June 1937 the Boundary Treaty between Iran and Iraq was finally signed. Sadly this was not to mark the end of disputes between Iran and Iraq. It was to take almost 40 more years of mistrust, bloodshed and suffering before both governments sought negotiation on the

basis of trust and understanding, a situation which would eventually culminate in the establishment of the Algiers Accord.

The historical conflicts between Iran and Ottoman prepared the ground for Europeans to manipulate the social and political and economic developments in the Middle East. The border issue was one of the means by which they achieved their ends. This manipulation was undertaken on a much larger and more sinister scale with the increase in capitalist expansion, which saw the advent of threats, bribes, war, financial and economic exploitation, operating through commercialisation and state building processes as the new means of extending control and influence.

9.3 The causes of conflict – the first question

In the beginning of the sixteenth century, when Shah Ismael declared Shi'ism to be the official state religion, he succeeded in sowing the seeds for the first conflict between Ottoman/Iraq and Iran. A total of eighteen protocols have been signed in the four hundred and twenty years of intermittent hostility that have occurred between Iran and Ottoman/Iraq since the Amasieh Treaty of 1555. None of these could successfully achieve lasting settlements to the disputes, as weakness on one side was generally seen as an opportunity for the other to gain an advantage.¹ This set in motion a cycle of events whereby the victor forced his will upon the vanquished, while the latter waited for an opportunity to redress the balance.

Before the influence of European penetration, especially that of Britain, religion was, at first sight, the significant cause of deep-rooted differences, suspicion and endemic war. The grievances and differences of their respective followers and the existence of the Shi'ite sacred tombs in Mesopotamia, all provided powerful incitements to war. The Ottoman authorities in Mesopotamia were commonly neglectful of and

¹ Parsadust, op. cit., pp.28-29.

even contemptuous of visiting Iranian pilgrims. The pilgrims in turn complained to their religious leaders at their treatment at the hands of the Ottoman authorities.

Consequently, there has been a powerful desire among religious leaders to have the sacred places of Karbala and Najaf annexed to their homelands.²

A brief review of the causes of conflicts and wars between Ottoman/Iraq and Iran shows us the ready inclination of each to accuse the other of starting the conflict. However, the intention of each country throughout the ensuing conflicts has always been to put survival first and then to secure domination. In addition, a number of differences between the antagonists are rhetorically heightened to provide the almost routine rationales for conflict. These include: differing religious beliefs, Sunni and Shi'ite; hostile and punitive behaviour of the authorities on both sides towards pilgrims; the changing allegiances of the provincial governors in border areas; asylum seekers; and the activities and demands of Kurdish tribes.

These above factors are generally taken to be the immediate causes of the conflicts between the two sides. However, underneath these factors there are certain other dilemmas facing these two societies that provide a deeper explanation of the real reasons for the continuing hostilities.

The expansionist policies of the Ottomans, Paul Kennedy explains, were perhaps the only solution for overcoming the internal problems of the Empire.³ However, these policies caused much anxiety amongst its neighbours. In the East, Iran successfully resisted the encroachments, but in the West, the Ottoman armies reached Vienna in the heart of Europe, and maintained domination over a large part of this continent for centuries. Following the change in international policies affected by the age of

² Ibid., pp.28-29.

³ Paul Kennedy, *op. cit.*, pp.10-16.

enlightenment and the industrial revolution, the European powers began to force the Ottoman retreat from the continent.

In Iran the situation was somewhat different. The Safavid dynasty in facing the external threats of Ottoman expansionist policies had begun to use the state religion of Shi'ism as the motivating force of resistance against the Sunni Ottoman forces. Therefore, all Iranian external and internal policies were pivoted around the Shi'ite doctrine. There was no doubt in Shah Ismael's mind about the effectiveness of the Shi'ite doctrine against the Sunni Ottoman. Despite warnings from the religious leaders he continued to expound his policies in Shi'ite terms declaring a curse upon the Sunni caliphs.

However, the three images discussed by Waltz, as well as the immediate and underlying explanation by Thucydides on the origin of war, were also key factors in explaining and understanding the wars between Ottoman/Iraq and Iran.

Thucydides in his book identifies the specific instances – the immediate cause of war – where Athenian and Spartan interests clashed. “This is in order”, he says, “that there should be no doubt in anyone's mind about what led to this great war falling upon the Hellens.”⁴ For him, “what made war inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and fear which this caused in Sparta as the underlying cause of the war”.⁵

Waltz argument concerns the importance of the nature of man, the nature of political systems and finally the anarchy of the international system. According to him states face each other with incompatible identities and conflictual dispositions,⁶ and the use of force “is a means of achieving the external ends of states, because there exists no consistent, reliable process of reconciling the conflicts of interest that inevitably arise

⁴ See Chapter 1.

⁵ Thucydides, *op. cit.*, p.49.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.49.

among similar units in a condition of anarchy".⁷ Although he considers the third image – the anarchical system of world politics – as the effective context of international relations, he rightly insists, "without the first image – the nature of man – and the second – the nature of political systems – there can be no knowledge of the forces that determine policy".⁸

These immediate causes of war (the first and second images for Waltz) and the underlying causes (the third image for Waltz) of conflicts as realised by Thucydides in the Peloponnesian War, may not be universally applicable throughout the history of conflicts, but contain enough validity to make them true of most conflicts.

In Thucydides and Waltz's discussions we find plausible explanations for the causes of the conflicts between Ottoman/Iraq and Iran. The superficial origin of conflict lies in issues relating to religion and security dilemmas, however the supervention of other factors, arising from the emergence of new production systems (class relations, etc.) and the external intrusion which imposed changes in econo-material and political conditions, can be seen as the really significant and deep-rooted causes of the conflicts.

9.4 Asymmetrical relations in the process – the second question

During the first period, capitalism was in its initial phase of expansion, driven by new technological developments in manufacturing and transportation, and regional economic and social issues were still the primary causes of conflicts. The most significant of these were the reciprocal security concerns, which often lapsed into open warfare.

⁷ Kenneth Waltz, *op. cit.*, p.238.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.238.

The visit of the English merchant, Richard Steel to the court of Shah Abbass, and the subsequent expulsion of the Portuguese and Spanish from the Persian Gulf region (1620) marked a new phase in the early European trade penetration of the region. European powers, most notably the British, tried to establish contact with local powers in order to gain commercial entrance and positions of advantage in the area. The end-result of these developments was the emergence of the policies of dominance and influence, which were to form the basis of the present asymmetrical relations that exist between the West and the Middle East. The way in which these policies led to the establishment of these relations is the subject of the second question of this research.

The Europeans used their diplomatic skills and military power, along with methods of deceit and bribery, in order to transform their trading ambitions into powerful positions of dominance and influence. These positions were achieved and made secure by the use of commercialisation and state-building processes backed up by the forceful treaties and military threats.

After 1945, the old "British dominated" order was to be replaced by the superpower rivalries of America and Russia. This new world order was to dominate international politics for several decades to come.

The social, political and economic developments in the Middle East were initially challenged and distorted by the early trade endeavours of European adventurers in the East (1500-1700). Later on these distortions would be transformed into an unequal interdependency relationship between these two geo-political regions (1700-2000).

A. Commercialisation and state building processes (1800-1945)

The twentieth century began for the Middle East with the demise of the Ottoman Empire and the simultaneous expansion of European projects of capitalist state formation in the region. Tracing the socio-economic changes that occurred in the Middle East and the way in which Europe penetrated the economic systems of this region has enabled us to understand the nature of later economic relations between the two regions.

The natural tendency of the tributary structure of Islamic territorial Empires (Ottoman, Qajar, and Mogul), according to Perry Anderson, was always, "to generate into parasitic tax farming". This was the main cause of their eventual decline.⁹ After the Treaty of Paris (1763) and the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt (1798), European intrusion into Ottoman lands hastened that empire's ultimate demise. Despite a number of attempts by the Porte to undertake internal reforms, the Ottoman proved unable to resist the centrifugal forces within and the growing pressures from without that led to the empires eventual break-up. Muhammed Ali's ambitious reforms in Egypt (1805-48) only accelerated the fragmentation. The onerous conditions of loans from the West to support attempts at modernisation, resulted in bankruptcy for the Ottoman – 1875 in Turkey and 1876 in Egypt. The direct European supervision of public finances in order to manage the foreign debts, provoked widespread revolt and resulted in the eventual occupation of Egypt by British forces in 1882.

Due to its strategic location the Middle East was economically defined by a trade surplus with Europe and a trade deficit with India and the Far East up to the nineteenth century. The British replaced the French as the main trading power with the eastern Mediterranean from 1789 onwards. Their situation was further enhanced by

⁹ Perry Anderson, *op. cit.*, p.500.

having already gained a 'capitulation' from the Porte in the seventeenth century, which allowed the foreign merchants a greater degree of autonomy within the Empire. The different commercial agreements between the Ottoman and Europeans resulted in the establishment of new networks, regulated by commercial tribunals and ultimately controlled by Europeans. Under the terms of the Treaty of Kutchak Kainarki the Russians established a right of protection over Christian holy places and of the Porte's orthodox Christian subjects, which served to encumber their considerable economic activities. The Turkish-Anglo commercial convention of 1838 imposed virtual free trade situation on the region. The French and Russians both gained similar concessions from the Porte and in 1861-62 a convention was signed allowing European manufacturers unhindered access to the Middle Eastern markets.

Falling transport and communication costs facilitated the steady commercialisation of the region and its continued incorporation into European trade networks. Large amounts of European capital were also invested in building, economic and commercial infrastructures. A financial system was created to cope with foreign trade and European settlement also began to increase in the region. This seemingly unstoppable flow of European expansion drove many local manufacturers out of business. Agriculture was also drawn into the processes of commercialisation by the expansion of cash crop farming, which proved widely detrimental to the domestic peoples. In essence, all aspects of society including the lowest and further reaches of the social and production systems were affected by the increased European expansion.

The European domination over the economics of the region took place through a combination of measures. Foreign currencies were made an acceptable media of exchange. Furthermore, the control of large parts of commerce and finance as well as public revenues and expenditures all came under foreign domination. The ease of

capitulation was the underpinning of these forms of influence in the region. Imperial influence now replaced direct occupation as the leading method of colonisation.¹⁰

After 1815, the trade balance with Europe deteriorated and was to remain in deficit up until the First World War. This state of affairs resulted in the creation of a dependent economy,¹¹ which served as a producer of primary products and a market for manufactured goods.¹²

A brief review of the political and economic developments in the Middle East shows that the politics of the region are not different from other parts of the world in their underlying drives. Indeed, Fred Halliday, Roger Owen and Sami Zubaida,¹³ appeared to believe in there being no differences at all. However, over the course of the nineteenth century Britain and France incorporated the Middle East's economic, social and political systems into the larger capitalist world system that they dominated. With the necessary administrative framework operating in the newly created state system the Western powers managed to secure the flow of oil on their own favourable terms. The internal expansion of capitalism was also in part the outcome of changed land systems under the 'sick Ottoman', as Tsar Nicholas described the Empire in 1853. Property relations in the Middle East were incorporated into the world capitalist system under forms of rule allied to its agent, the state system of the West. The emergent domestic elite in the Middle East, as in other places in the Third World, played an important role as local intermediaries in implementing the economic developments instigated by the West. They coalesced in the processes of colonial division of labour, and in the exchange of primary materials and agricultural products for imported manufactured

¹⁰ Charles Issawi, *op. cit.*, p.9.
¹¹ Simon Bromley, *op. cit.*, p.9.
¹² Roger Owen, *op. cit.*, p.29.
¹³ See Chapter 1.

goods. The dependency relationship was consolidated as a colonial division, disguised in the formal literature as a progressive international division of labour.

The 1895-1914 economic boom in the capitalist world undermined the socio-economic stability of the periphery and made obsolescent its archaic politics. The ground was laid for a wave of revolutions, the first of which occurred in Russia in 1905. Indeed, it was the 'combustible material', as Hobsbawm has termed it, of the periphery that provided the context for the final Bolshevik revolution of 1917.

During this period the Soviet Union undertook a diplomatic offensive against Great Britain,¹⁴ as well as the United States' quest for oil to support its advanced manufacturing economy. The revolutionary legacy of the Great War, as it was called, and spreading infection of nationalism, all made a major impact on the evolution of the modern Middle East.

The tribalism, Islamism and Arabism that emerged from the area all came to be shaped within the context of nation-building. Thereafter, the policy of 'gunboat diplomacy', the most frequently used policy of nineteenth century Europe in their relations the Middle East, was replaced by a policy of including the region in the capitalist system. The new policy means were numerous but always self-serving: diplomacy, finance, loans, technical support, military and political alliances. In addition, and whenever it was deemed necessary, coercion was often employed, as well as even coups d'état in 'renegade' states, often against their nationalist and sometimes democratically elected governments, in order to preserve the economic and political status quo.

¹⁴

E. Carr, *op. cit.*, p.244.

B. The period after the Second World War

The depression of the inter-war period, falling international trade, low capital flow and the break-up of the gold standard, provided the backdrop for the rise of the two superpowers that replaced the old 'British dominated' world order. The costs of colonial control rested heavily on the old international powers, whose status was further eroded by new superpower opposition to their colonial policies as laid out in the Truman Doctrine. The unfolding British policy of limited commitment was in contrast to the American policy of association with reactionary regimes (especially in Asia and South America). This, in turn, was further contrasted with Russia's policy of support for radical regimes and progressive nationalist governments. However, the limitations of the ideologically informed Soviet economic programmes, in comparison with the capital flows and economic aid of the USA, pushed the Middle East deeper into the capitalist camp.

The US were following a hegemonic strategy based on commitment to the support of Israel, arming and giving economic aid to 'friendly' regimes, and effectively integrating the local ruling classes into the world capitalist system. Furthermore, this strategy was extended with strong support for non-oil, but pro-Western states such as Egypt (after Nasser) and Turkey. On the level of political economy in the region, the availability of oil rents and the geographical importance of the region have been key elements affecting these integrating processes. The Middle East military expenditures between 1960 and 1986 multiplied six-fold. Although the need for rapid political and economic development is the stated reason for these expenditures,¹⁵ the real reason lies in the availability of large oil rents to most of the countries in the region and their fears in relation to national and regime insecurity. Unitarist and traditionalist authoritarian

¹⁵

C. Tilly, *op. cit.*, p.212.

regimes were the general outcome of the internal conditions and external influences acting on these countries to which burgeoning arms transactions have been a further contributory factor. However, it is not surprising to learn that Saudi Arabia and Iraq as open-frontiered states were the biggest military spenders in the region.

The increase in oil production and its derived revenues precipitated notable growth into the early 1980s. However, internal regional wars and the volatility of oil prices generated rising debts as regimes laboured under mounting internal pressures.

Despite vast oil revenues domestic economies performed poorly with the manufacturing sector in the region accounting for only 15 percent of total GNP. The Middle East is the least food-sufficient area in the world. The oil, petro-chemical and other associated industries were the most obvious in a general pattern of capital intensive economic development. Minimal and distorted domestic employment, budget deficits and inflation were common effects of this policy. All these factors contributed to stagnant economies defined by the poor distribution of incomes and wealth, and uneven social development.

Tables 9-14 (Appendix 6) depict those aspects of the economies of most concern. It is clear that Turkey and Egypt, the two non-oil producing states, have more diversified economies and have for the most part succeeded in breaking away from the pattern of international division of labour. However, the three oil producing states – Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia – are totally reliant on oil rents for nearly all of their state revenues and foreign exchange requirements.

Oil has distorted the pattern of socio-economic and political development and has financed the accumulation of the largest concentration of military power in the Third World.

The truth is that the great surge of wealth of the oil rentier states has brought with it its own forms of dependency in the form of an over-reliance on foreign technology and technical skills, and on developments in the international markets over which they have little control or protective strategic support. A small elite exacts a luxurious level of life comparable to the highest levels in the Western World while for the majority of the population poverty is a norm, the level of which is only exceeded in the least developed region (sub-Saharan Africa) of the world. Paradoxically, however, it is in the areas of education and welfare, where many oil-rich states have a sense of enlightenment, that have provided the regimes with some of their major problems. These general improvements have made the population aware of their relative affluence deprivation and led to feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration. Furthermore, they have left the government with a large infrastructural investment commitment, which it may find difficult to sustain during leaner times in the future. It is not surprising that economic crisis and political failure have provided crucial conditions for what, misleadingly, is known as 'Islamic fundamentalism'.

9.5 The prospect for the future

In the second chapter of this work we observed the regional social, economic and military developments that resulted in conflicts and wars between Iran and Ottoman/Iraq. Since the late 17th century traditional European trade relations with the Middle East were advanced with the support of military power, skilful diplomacy and financial advantage. The use of deceit and threat of war furthered the interests of Western capitalism. The balance of relations between the Middle East and Europe were distorted, resulting in the establishment an asymmetrical system of encounter between the two regions.

The economic boom of the 1950s and 1960s, combined with the relative economic decline in late 1970s, and the end of the cold war affected the nature of the relationship between the West and the Middle East. According to Paul Kennedy, although the world's real GNP quadrupled from \$US two trillion to about \$US eight trillion from 1950 to 1980 alone, the world heads towards the twenty-first century with more than a billion people living in poverty, who are struggling to survive on less than \$US 370 a year.¹⁶

At the international level the wide-scale transnational movements of capital and information technology, and the division of labour have led to the age of globalisation in which human society in its global totality is affected by common problems such as environmental degradation, demographic explosions, and the widening gap between the North and the South, and within local parts of the world.

Modern capitalist polarisation as Samir Amin explains, has appeared in successive forms during the evolution of the capitalist mode of production: the mercantilist (1500-1600), the classical model (after 1800), which grew out of the industrial revolution and defined the basic forms of capitalism, the post-war period (1945-90), which eroded the previous forms of development, leading into the final and the most recent period of development (since 1990).¹⁷

Denying the hegemonic school of historiography, as an exception to the rule, Samir believes that increasing competitiveness between the centre and periphery is a complex product of many economic, political and social factors. In this unequal fight the centres use their tight monopolies; technological, financial, access to advanced

¹⁶ Paul Kennedy, *Preparing for the Twenty-first Century*, (Harper Collins Publisher, London, 1993). Quoted from World Development Report, (Washington D.C., 1990). P.III.

¹⁷ Samir Amin, *Capitalism in the Age of Globalisation*, (Zed Books, London, 1997), pp.1-2.

productive capital, media and communication, and weapons of mass production, against the periphery.

However, in contrast to the dominant ideological discourse – globalisation via the market – as a reactionary utopia, Samir believes the old system of globalisation is not able to prepare its own succession and can only lead to chaos. He suggests the establishment of a global political system that is not in the service of a global market.¹⁸ He ascribes four major responsibilities to this new political system: a) global disarmament, b) access to the planet's resources, c) flexible economic relationship between the world's major regions, d) correct management of global communications, culture and political policy.

It still remains to be seen what the final outcome of the present phase of capitalism will be but the current decisions being made in present world politics seem to bear testimony to Samir's optimistic projections.

Frances Fukuyama, drawing on Marx and Hegel, posits an "end of history" on the belief that history is not open-ended. For Marx the end-state was to be a communist society. For Hegel it was the 'liberal' state. But for Fukuyama this historical resolution is to be a liberal democracy posited on economics and what he terms the "struggle for recognition". Thus for Hegel, Marx and Fukuyama the natural cycle of life does not end, but in accordance with how they perceive history, there would be no further progress in the development of underlying principles and institutions as all the really big questions would have been settled.¹⁹

Fukuyama believes in a coherent and directional history of all mankind that will eventually lead the greater part of humanity towards a liberal democracy. In addition,

¹⁸ Ibid., pp.5-6.

¹⁹ Frances Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, (Penguin Books, London, 1992), pp.xi-xii.

liberal principles in economics – the free market – have spread, and have succeeded in producing unprecedented levels of material prosperity, both in industrially developed countries and, as Fukuyama goes on to argue,²⁰ in the countries that had been, at the close of World War II, part of the impoverished Third World.

However, statistics prove the existence of persistent poverty in the greater part of the world and amongst its peoples and point to an ever-widening gap between the developed and underdeveloped countries. The second problem arises from the fact that the liberal democracy as it is characterised is functional to economic development, which proves difficult to achieve or relate to with regard to dictatorial regimes. Furthermore, history as deterministic denies the human role in the historical processes. As Karl R. Popper has reminded us, “the future of the evolution of life was open, and was a process with both accidents and preferences – preferences of the organisms for certain possibilities – were mixed”.²¹ In the world of social life, the contemporary appeal for democracy is a chosen preference by the present capitalist systems of the world.

Samuel P. Huntington interprets the evolution of global politics after the cold war by arguing that “clashes of civilisations” now form the greatest threat to world politics. An international order based on civilisation is the surest safeguard against World War.²² No paradigm is internally valid, but a civilisational approach may still be helpful to an understanding of global politics in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.²³

²⁰ Ibid., p.xiii.

²¹ Karl R. Popper, *A World of Propensities*, (Thoemmes, Bristol, 1995), p.26.

²² Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilisation and the Remaking of World Order*, (Simon & Schuster, New York, 1996), p.13.

²³ Ibid., p.14.

After the Cold War, the critical distinctions between people are no longer primarily ideological or economic, but cultural, determining how we perceive reality, what facts we look at, and how we judge their importance and merits. Huntington argues that, "we need explicit or implicit models".²⁴ For him world politics is being reconfigured along cultural lines, and it is these that provide the new patterns of conflict and co-operation replacing those of the Cold War. Highlighting the recent ethnic cleansing in different parts of the world, he believes that the hot spots in world politics are on the "fault line" between civilisations.²⁵

Huntington's assertions prove somewhat problematic for a number of reasons. In the first instance, the two great wars of this century were fought between the nations within the same cultural and religious sphere over opposing ideological viewpoints. Secondly, there is not a distinct line between politics and culture. Social, economic and political institutions can moderate different cultures in creating either tolerant or progressive societies. In the developed world, the relatively harmonious coexistence of different cultures and casts further doubt of the notion of cultures clashing.

Fred Halliday observes that, "civilisations are like nations, traditions, communities. They are terms that claim a reality and authority which is itself open to question, and appeal to a tradition that turns out, on closer inspection, to be a contemporary creation".²⁶

The Middle East, as with other third world regions of the world, is caught in the intersection of superpower politics and regional developments, which involves its peoples, governments, state and societies in a fluctuating system of co-operation and conflict.

²⁴ Ibid., p.30.

²⁵ Ibid., p.13.

²⁶ Fred Halliday, *op. cit.*, p.3.

Problems of asymmetric relations affect most countries of the Middle East, and it is a state of affairs that can be predicted to persist for the foreseeable future. However, it is also necessary to be vigilant of the dangers of using the conspiracy theory as a reliable tool for analysing the political developments in this region.²⁷ However, with reference to the historical facts presented in this study, I believe that conspiracy and deceit have been powerful policy instruments used by the Europeans and the superpowers in pursuing their policy objectives in this region. Although these policies have not been a complete success at all times, they have nevertheless been important elements in shaping the politics of the Middle East.

The future of the region will be dictated by the outcome of the implantation of capitalistic economy with its superstructure state and nationalist ideology. This is very much in keeping with the developments that have taken place in the modern history of both Iran and Iraq.

However, in the last quarter of the twentieth century the configuration of world politics and power has changed or been consolidated in a number of different ways. The Middle East, along with all other parts of the world, will be more firmly integrated into a global system of capitalistic production and market exchange. Globalisation will not be utterly triumphant in its capitalistic manifestation, despite its impressive confounding of Marxism projections, as unevenness of development between regions will continue to be apparent. In this instance regional factors will be influential and the global system will have to meet challenges at its own level.

International capitalist economy founded on 'Western' technology will cease to be the exclusive preserve of those powers that were its authors. Western capitalism can

²⁷ Ibid., pp.39-41.

no longer expand in hegemonic ways and must accede to liberalised implantations, and local Third World receivers of market-capitalist economy.

The pressure of the poorer peoples to share in the system's (which hitherto has been their exploiters) 'growth' and international equity will be challenged by the threat of global exhaustion of resources and the potential of environmental decay and disaster.

Globalisation will, however, not be seamless as regional features will continue to be identifiable. Regions will be faced with the dual commitment of their internal preoccupations and their particular external role in the greater system. The Middle East will continue to be the main energy source for the world, but must be wise enough to prepare for an alternative future when these resources will inevitably run out. Water may come to down-stage oil as the region's main concern. In the meantime, Israel's role in the region, in the longer term, is becoming a more accommodating one, and changes must be made to reflect that fact. Fundamentalism, of whatever complexion, needs to be seen as "brawls for nothing". Furthermore, theological particularisms and high secular expectations must learn to come to terms with and accommodate the increasing pressures of popular demands.

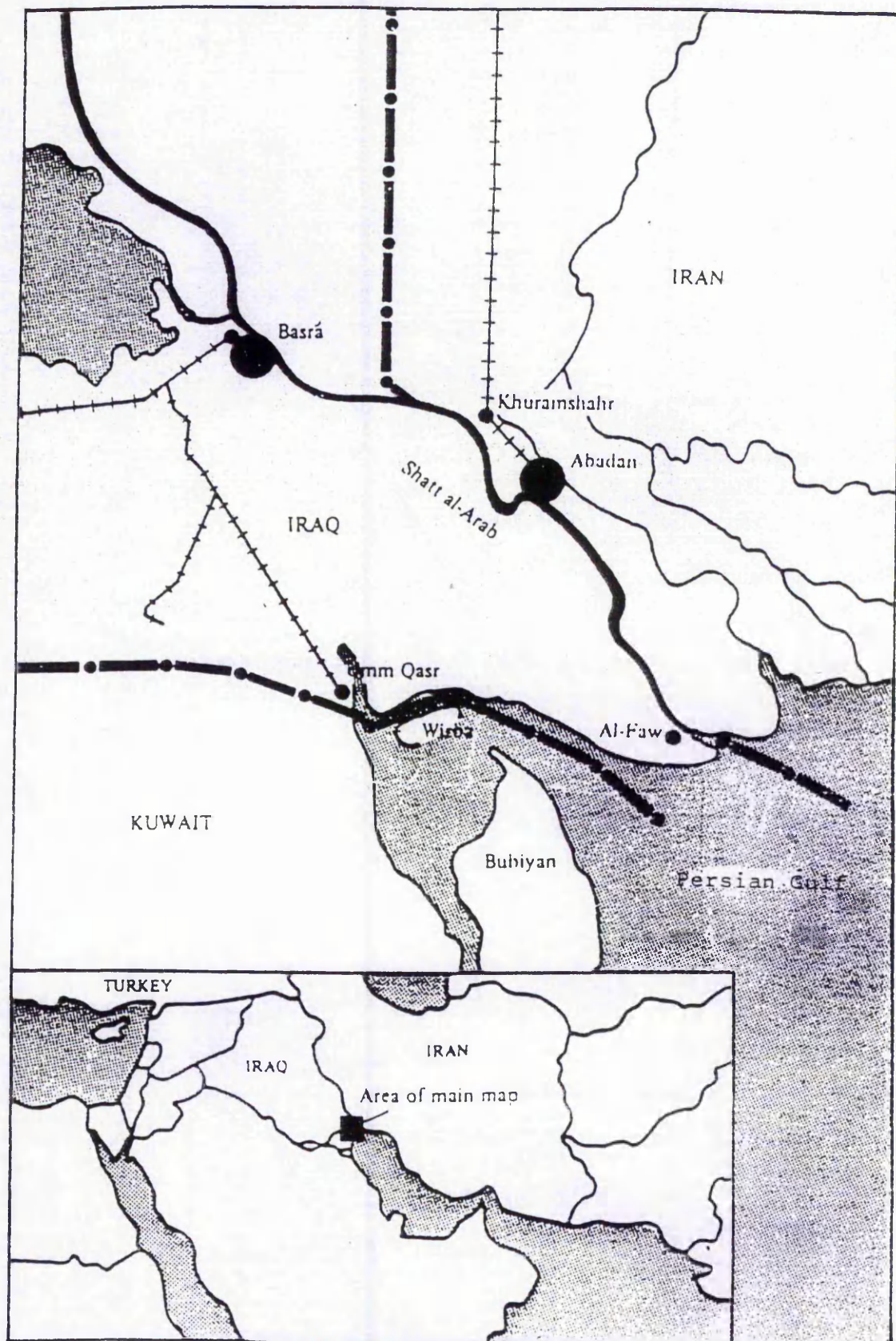
Historical and cultural understanding and interpretations of the Middle East have for the most part been greatly distorted. Almost by convention they have been affected by a disposition to put upon the peoples of the region a number of supposed widely shared characteristics such as religious fanaticism, tribal-ethnic intervention, internecine hatreds, and a characteristic 'perfidy'. In their common submission to the superiority of the West (its arms, technology, commercial drives and diplomatic willingness) the peoples of the region have responded to these interpretations self-reflectively.

This thesis has sought to account for the growth and consolidation of an asymmetric set of relationships between 'east' and 'west' – though it acknowledges the

fact that the terms 'east' and 'west' are problematic and also form part of the problem. There have been for several centuries now a course of historical development in which all regions have shared or have come to share in – religious ideology, dynastic clashes, conflicts over borders and commercial interest, economic 'cornering' of the world markets, and the ultimate momentum of international capital economy.

The asymmetry between East and West has accrued from the deceits and consequences of East-West contact and from the collusion of internal self-serving elites. Iraq and Iran will become better able to resolve their differences as and when they properly identify their common unfavoured place in the sequence of events that is, the development and growth of international capital economy. The asymmetry between the West and the Middle East will only be dissolved when the Middle East understands, and acts in accordance with, the rationale that has driven the West since the enlightenment.

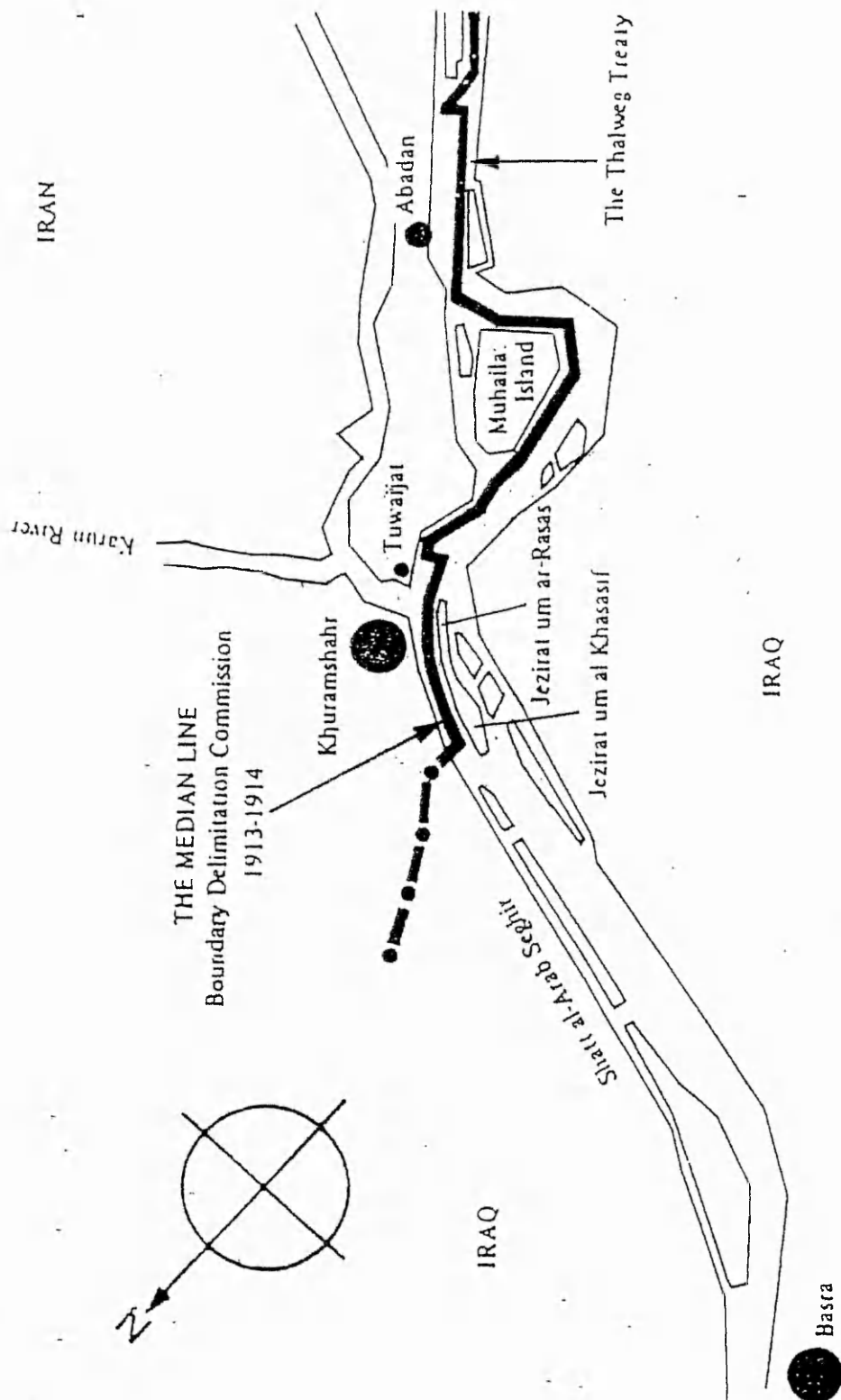
Taken from *The Middle East Journal*, 1968, in an amended form



A. Muhammara and its Environs

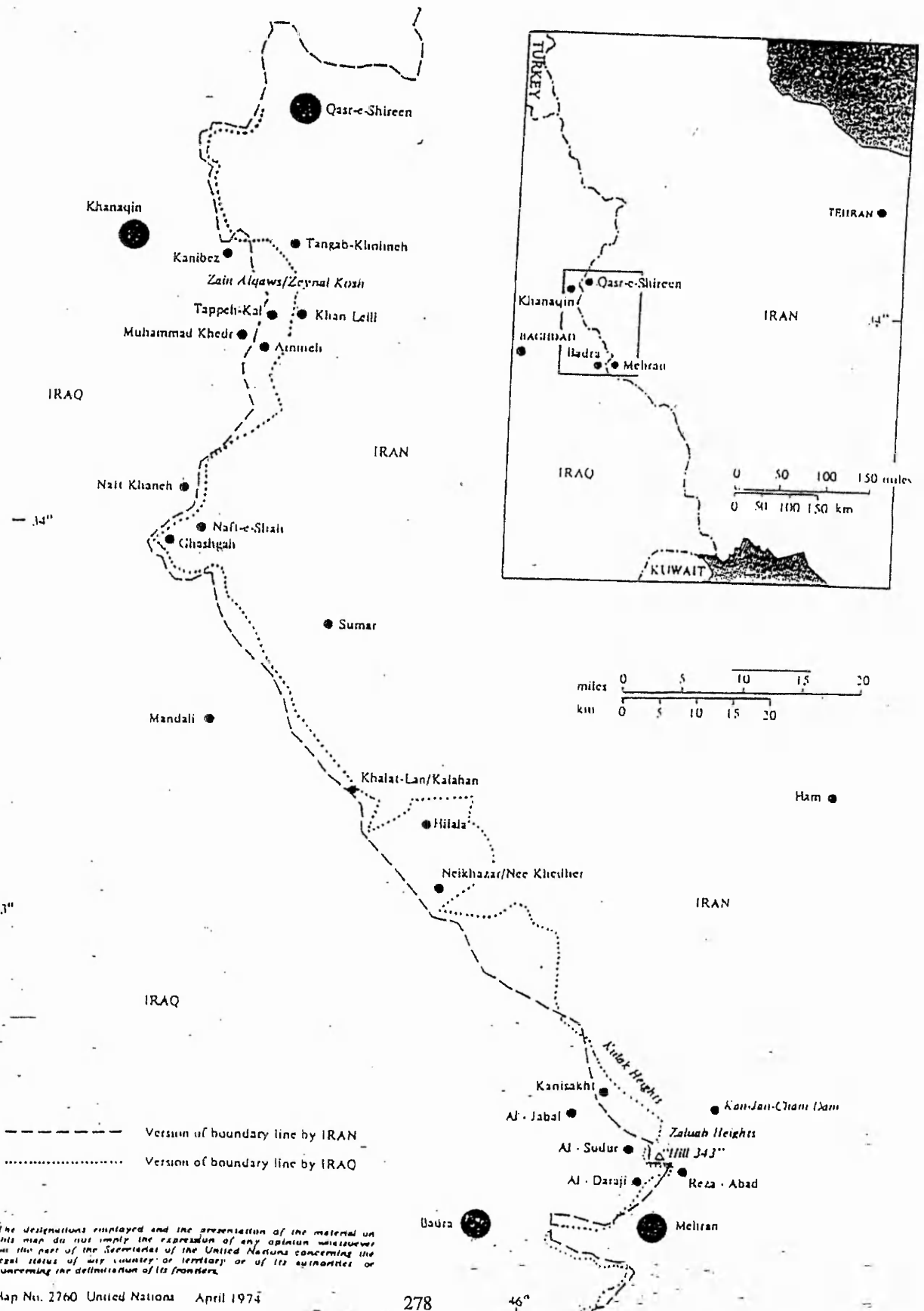
Shatt al-Arab Basin

Part I



B. Shatt al-Arab Basin

C. Iran-Iraq Land Borders



CHRONOLOGIES

THE PERIODS OF STUDY

First Part: First period	1514-1800	Regional Development
Second Part: Second period	1800-1920	European Domination
Third period	1920-1945	(European Influence (with
Fourth period	1945-2000	(Institutional changes in the region.

THE TREATIES

Time		Titles	Parties
29 May	1555	Amasieh Treaty	Iran-Ottoman
Dec	1589	First Istanbul Treaty	" "
16 Dec	1618	Sarah Treaty	" "
17 May	1639	Zohab Treaty	" "
23 July	1724	Istanbul Treaty	" "
	1727	The 1727 Treaty	Ashraf- "
Sept	1746	Kordan Treaty	Iran- "
May	1800	Norfontain	France, Russia, Germany, Sweden and Denmark
Jan	1801	Tehran Treaty	Iran-Britain
14 May	1813	Rsiechenbak Treaty	Russia, England and Germany
21 Oct.	1813	Goleston Treaty	Iran-Russia
25 Nov.	1814	British-Iran Treaty	British-Iran
26 Sept.	1815	Alliance Treaty	European Powers
8 June	1823	First Erzerum Treaty	Iran-Ottoman
Mar.	1828	Secret Treaty	Russian-Ottoman
31 May	1847	Second Erzerum Treaty	Iran-Ottoman
4 May	1857	Paris Treaty	Iran-Britain
	1907	1907 Treaty	Russia-Britain
19 Aug.	1911	Postdam Treaty	Kaiser-Tzar
21 Dec.	1911	Tehran Protocol	Iran-Ottoman
4 Nov.	1913	Constantinople Protocol	Iran-Ottoman
	1919	1919 Treaty	Iran-Britain
Oct.	1922	Anglo-Iraq Treaty	Iraq-Britain
	1930	Anglo-Iraq Treaty	Iraq-Britain
4 Jul.	1937	Boundry Treaty	Iran-Ottoman
27 Aug.	1939	Saad Abad Treaty	Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan
6 Mar.	1975	Algiers' Accord	Iran-Iraq

THE EVENTS

Time		Events	Actors
	1514	Chaldoron Conflict	Iran-Ottoman
	1809	Austria-French War	Austria and France
	1812	French Russian War	France and Russia
Oct.	1813	France and the European Allies	European Power-France
	1815	Vienna Conference	European Powers
	1821	Iran-Ottoman War	Iran-Ottoman
	1872	Ruiter Concession	Mr. Ruiter-Iran
	1878	Berlin Conference	European Powers
	1882	" "	" "
	1901	Iranian Oil Concession	Mr. William Knox D'Arce and Iran
	1906	Iranian Constitutional Revolution	Iran
Oct.	1910	British Forces Landed in South of Iran	British Forces
16 Mar.	1916	British Forces Landed in Iran	" "
	1920	The San Remo Conference	The First World War Victors
22 June	1946	Declaration of Republic of Mahabad	Godhi Muhammed
Aug.	1953	Coup d'etat in Iran	C.I.A. and Britain with Shah Collaboration
14 Jul.	1958	Iraq Revolution	General Qasim and Col. Arif
8 Feb.	1963	Qasim's Regime Collapse	Col. ARif
17 Jul.	1964	The Law of American Immunity in Iran	U.S.A.-Iran
	1973	Oil Embargo	Oil Producing Countries in Middle East
6 Mar.	1975	Algiers' Accord	Iran-Iraq
21 Sept.	1980	Iran-Iraq War	Iran and Iraq

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Second Erzerum Treaty. 1847

Article 1

The two Mussulman [Muslem] powers waive the totality of their existing pecuniary claims on one another, provided always that nothing in this arrangement shall affect the provision made for the settlement of the claims to which Article 4 relates.

Article 2

The Persian government undertakes to cede to the Ottoman government all lands, that is to say, the land in the western part of the province of Zuhab; and the Ottoman government undertakes to cede to the Persian government the eastern, that is to say, all the mountainous part of the said province, including the Kirind valley.

The Persian government abandons all claims to the city and province of Sulaimaniyah and formally undertakes the sovereign rights of the Ottoman government over it. The Ottoman government formally recognises the unrestricted sovereignty of the Persian government over the city and part of Muhammara, the island of Khizr, the Abadan anchorage, and the land on the eastern bank - that is to say, the left bank of the Shatt al-Arab, which are in the possession of tribes recognised as belonging to Persia. Further, Persian vessels shall have the right to navigate freely without let or hindrance on the Shatt al-Arab from the mouth of the same to the point of contact of the two parties' frontiers.

Article 3

The two Contracting Parties, having by the present Treaty waived their other territorial claims, undertake forthwith to appoint Commissioners and engineers as their respective representatives for the purpose of determining the frontiers between the two states in conformity with the preceding article

Article 4

Both parties are agreed as to the appointment forthwith, by both parties, of commissioners for the purpose of adjudicating and making a fair settlement in all cases of damage suffered by either party since the acceptance of the friendly proposals drawn up and communicated by the two mediating great powers in the month of Jemaziyyu-'l-evvel 1261, together with all questions of pasturage dues since the year in which the arrears in the payment of the latter began.

Article 5

The Ottoman government undertakes that the fugitive Persian princes shall reside at Brussa, and shall not be permitted to leave the place or maintain secret relations with Persia. The two high contracting powers further undertake that all the other refugees shall be handed over in conformity with the earlier Treaty of Erzerum.

Article 6

Persian merchants shall pay the custom dues on their goods, in kind or in cash, according to the current present value of such goods, in the manner specified in the article relating to trade in the Treaty of Erzerum concluded in 1823. No additional charge whatsoever shall be levied over and above the amounts fixed in the said Treaty.

Article 7

The Ottoman government undertakes to accord the requisite privileges to enable Persian pilgrims, in accordance with the former treaties, to visit the Holy places in the Ottoman dominions in complete safety and without vexatious treatment of any kind. Further, the Ottoman government being desirous of strengthening and consolidating the bands of friendship and control which should subsist between the two Mussulman powers and between their respective subjects, undertake to adopt such measures as may be most appropriate to ensure the participation not only of Persian pilgrims, but of all other Persian subjects, in all the said privileges in the Ottoman dominions, in such a manner as to protect them from any sort of injustice, molestation, or incivility, whether with respect to their commercial activities or any other aspects.

Furthermore, the Ottoman government undertakes to recognise consuls to be appointed by the Persian government in places in the Ottoman dominions where their presence may be required on account of commercial interests, or for protecting Persian subjects, save only in Mecca the Revered and Medina the Resplendent, and to respect in the case of the said consuls all the privileges due by virtue of their official character and accord to consuls of other friendly powers.

The Persian government for its part, undertakes to accord reciprocity of treatment in every respect to consuls to be appointed by the Ottoman government in places in Persia in which the latter may consider the appointment of consuls to be necessary, as also to Ottoman merchants and other Ottoman subjects visiting Persia.

Article 8

The two High Contracting Mussulman Powers undertake to adopt and enforce the measures necessary to prevent and punish theft and brigandage on the part of the tribes and peoples settled on the frontier, to which end they will quarter troops in suitable localities. They further undertake to do their duty in respect of all forms of aggressive acts, such as pillage, robbery, or murder, which may occur in their respective territories.

Contested tribes the suzerainty over which is not known shall be left free by the two High Contracting Powers to choose once for all and specify the localities which they will henceforward always inhabit. Tribes the suzerainty over which is known shall be compelled to come within the territory of the state to which they belong.

Article 9

All points or articles of previous treaties, and especially of the Treaty concluded at Erzerum in 1823, which are not especially amended or annulled by the present Treaty, are hereby reaffirmed in respect of any and all of their provisions, as if they were reproduced in their entirety in the present Treaty.

The two High Contracting Powers agree that, when the texts of this Treaty have been exchanged they will accept and sign the same, and that the ratifications thereof shall be exchanged, within the space of two months, or earlier.

16 jemadi al-Akbar \1263 Mirza Taghi Khan

Anwar Effendi.

APPENDIX 2

Tehran Protocol, 21 December 1911.

The Persian and Ottoman governments, inspired by a common desire to avoid henceforward any subject of controversy in respect of their common frontiers, having instructed the Persian Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Turkish Ambassador at Tehran, respectively, to establish the basis of negotiation and the procedure to be followed for the delimitation of the said frontiers, the undersigned, after discussion, have agreed on the following points:

I. A commission consisting of an equal number of delegates of either Party shall meet as early as possible at Constantinople.

II. The delegates of the two governments, furnished with all the documents and evidence in support of their claims, shall be instructed to establish the boundary line separating the two countries in a spirit of sincere impartiality; after which, a technical commission shall have merely to apply the definite delimitation on the spot; on the basis laid down by the frontier commission.

III. The work of the joint Commission, which will meet at Constantinople, shall be based on the clauses of the treaty known as the Treaty of Erzerum, concluded in 1848.

IV. Should the delegates of the two parties fail to agree on the interpretation and application of certain clauses of that treaty, it is agreed that, at the end of six months of negotiation, in order completely to settle the question of the delimitation of the frontiers, all the points on which any divergence exists shall be submitted together to the Court of Arbitration at the Hague, in order that the entire question may thus be definitely settled.

V. It is understood that neither of the two parties may adduce the military occupation of the territories in disputes as a legal argument.

Done in the duplicate and exchanged in original between the undersigned acting on behalf of their governments.

The Imperial Ottoman Empire Embassy, Tehran 21 December 1911.

Wossugh al-Dowleh

H. Hassih

APPENDIX 3

The Boundary Treaty of 1937

Article 1

The High Contracting Parties are agreed that, subject to the amendment of which Article 2 of the Present Treaty provides the following documents shall be deemed valid and binding, that is to say:

- (a) The Turco-Persian Protocol signed at Constantinople on 4 November 1913;
- (b) The Minutes of the meetings of the 1914 Frontier Delimitation Commission.

In virtue of the present Article, the frontier between the two states shall be as defined and traced by the aforesaid Commission save in so far as otherwise provided in Article 2 hereinafter following.

Article 2

At the extreme point of the island of Shuteit (being approximately latitude 30° 17'25" North, longitude 48° 19'28" East), the frontier shall run perpendicularly from low-water mark to the Thalweg of the Shatt al-Arab, and shall follow the same as far as a point opposite the present jetty No.1 at Abadan (being approximately latitude 30° 20' 8.4" North, longitude 48° 16'13" East). From this point, it shall return to low-water mark, and follow the frontier line indicated in the 1914 Minutes.

Article 3

Upon the signature of the present Treaty, the High Contracting Parties shall appoint forthwith a commission to erect frontier marks at the points determined by the commission to which Article 1, paragraph (b), of the present Treaty relates, and to erect such frontiers as it shall deem desirable.

The composition of the commission and its programme of work shall be determined by special arrangement between the two High Contracting Parties.

Article 4

The provision hereinafter shall apply to the Shatt al-Arab from the point at which the land frontier of the two states enters the said river to the high sea:

- (a) The Shatt al-Arab shall remain open on equal terms to the trading vessels of all countries. All dues levied shall be in the nature of payment for services rendered and shall be devoted exclusively to meeting in equitable manner the cost of upkeep, maintenance of navigational ability or improvement of the navigable channel and the approach to the Shatt al-Arab from the sea, or to expenditure incurred in the interests of navigation. The said dues shall be calculated on the basis of the official tonnage of vessels or their displacement or both.
- (b) The Shatt al-Arab shall remain open for the passage of vessels of war and other vessels of the two High Contracting Parties not engaged in trade.
- (c) The circumstance that the frontier in the Shatt al-Arab sometimes follows the low-water mark and sometimes the Thalweg or *medium filum aquae* shall not in any way affect the two High Contracting Parties' right of use along the whole length of the river.

Article 5

The two High Contracting Parties, having common interests in the navigation of the Shatt al-Arab as defined in Article 4 of the present treaty, undertake to conclude a convention for the maintenance and improvement of the navigable channel, and for dredging, pilotage, collection of dues, health measures, measures for preventing smuggling, and all other questions concerning navigation in the Shatt al-Arab, as defined in Article 4 of the present Treaty.

Article 6

The present Treaty shall be ratified and the instrument of ratification shall be exchanged in Baghdad as soon as possible. It shall come into force as from the date of such exchange.

In faith whereof the plenipotentiaries of the two High Contracting Parties have signed the present Treaty.

Done at Tehran, in the Arabic, Persian and French languages: in case of disagreement, the French text shall prevail.

4 July 1937

Signed

Enayatollah Samiy

Naji al-Asil

APPENDIX 4

Protocol

At the moment of signing the frontier Treaty between Iraq and Iran, the two High Contracting Parties are agreed as follows:

I

The geographical co-ordinates designed approximately in Article 2 of the aforesaid Treaty shall be definitively determined by a commission of experts consisting of an equal number of members appointed by each of the High Contracting Parties.

The geographical co-ordinates thus definitively determined within the limits fixed in the aforesaid Article shall be recorded in Minutes, the which, after the signature of the members of the said Commission, shall form an integral part of the Frontier Treaty.

II

The High Contracting Parties undertake to conclude the convention to which Article 5 of the Treaty relates within one year from the entry into force of the Treaty.

In the event of the same Convention not being concluded within the year despite their utmost efforts, the said time limit may be extended by the High Contracting Parties by common accord.

The Imperial Government of Iran agrees that, during the period of one year to which the first paragraph of the present Article relates or the extension (if any) of such period, the Royal Government of Iraq shall be responsible as at present of all questions to be settled under the said Convention. The Royal Government of Iraq shall notify the Imperial Government of Iran every six months as to the works executed, dues collected, expenditure incurred or any other measures undertaken.

III

Permission granted by either of the High Contracting Parties to a vessel of war or other public service vessel not engaged in trade, belonging to a third state, to enter its own harbours on the Shatt al-Arab shall be deemed to have been granted by the other High Contracting Party in such sort that the vessels in question shall be entitled to use the waters of the latter for the purpose of navigating the Shatt al-Arab.

The High Contracting Parties granting such permission shall immediately notify the other High Contracting Party accordingly.

IV

It is clearly understood, without prejudice to the right of Iran in respect of the Shatt al-Arab, that nothing in this Treaty shall affect the rights of Iraq and the contractual obligations of the same vis-à-vis the British Government in respect of the Shatt al-Arab under Article 4 of the Treaty of 30 June 1930 and paragraph 7 of the annex thereto signed on the same date.

V

The present Protocol shall be ratified at the same time as the Frontier Treaty of which it shall form an annex and integral part. It shall come into force at the same time as the Treaty.

The present Protocol is drawn up in Arabic, Persian and French, the French text shall prevail.

Done at Tehran in duplicate, the fourth day of July, one thousand and nine hundred and thirty seven.

Signed

Enayatollah Samiy

Naji al-Asil

APPENDIX 5

THE 1907 TREATY

The Governments of Great Britain and Russia having mutually agreed to respect the integrity and independence of Persia, and sincerely desiring the preservation of order and its peaceful development throughout that country, as well as the permanent establishment of equal advantages for the trade and industry of all other nations.

Considering that each of them has, for geographical and economic reasons, a special interest in the maintenance of peace and order in certain provinces of Persia adjoining, or in the neighbourhood of, the Russian frontier on the one hand; and the frontiers of Afghanistan and Baluchistan on the other, and being desirous of avoiding all causes of conflict between their respective interests in the above-mentioned provinces of Persia;

Have agreed on the following terms:-

I.

Great Britain engages not, to seek for herself, and not to support in favour of British subjects, or in favour of the subjects of third powers, any concessions of a political or commercial nature - such as concessions for railways, banks, telegraphs, roads, transport, insurance, etc. - beyond a line starting from Kasr-i-Shirin, passing through Isfahan, Yezd, Kakhk, and ending at a point on the Persian frontier at the intersection of the Russian and Afghan frontiers, and not to oppose, directly or indirectly, demands for similar concessions in this region which are supported by the Russian Government. It is understood that the above-mentioned places are included in the region in which Great Britain engages not to seek the concession referred to.

II.

Russia, on her part, engages not to seek for herself and not to support, in favour of Russian subjects, or in favour of the subjects of third powers, any concessions of a

political or commercial nature - such as concessions for railways, banks, telegraphs, roads, transport, insurance, etc. - beyond a line going from the Afghan frontier by way of Gazik, Birjand, Kerman, and ending at Bunder Abbas, and not to oppose, directly or indirectly, demand for similar concessions in this region which are supported by the British Government. It is understood that the above-mentioned places are included in the region in which Russia engages not to seek the concessions referred to.

III.

Russia, on her part, engages not to oppose, without previous arrangement with Great Britain, the granting of any concessions whatever to British subjects in the region of Persia situated between the lines mentioned in Articles I and II.

Great Britain undertakes a similar engagement as regards the grant of concessions to Russian subjects in the same regions of Persia.

All concessions existing at present in the regions indicated in Articles I and II are maintained.

IV.

It is understood that the revenues of all Persian Customs with exception of those of Farsistan and of the Persian Gulf, revenues guaranteeing the amortisation and the interest of the loans concluded by the Government of the Shah with "Banque d'Escompte et des Prêts de Perse" up to the date of the signature of the present Agreement, shall be devoted to the same purpose as in the past.

It is equally understood that the revenues of the Persian Customs of Farsistan and the Persian shore of the Caspian Sea and those of the Posts and Telegraphs, shall be devoted, as in the past, to the service of the loans concluded by the Government of the Shah with the Imperial Bank of Persia up to the date of the signature of the present Agreement.

V.

In the event of irregularities occurring in the amortisation or the payment of the interest of the Persian loans concluded with the "Banque d'Escompte et des Prêts de Perse" and with the Imperial Bank of Persia up to the date of the signature of the present agreement, and in the event of the necessity arising for Russia to establish control over the sources of revenues guaranteeing the regular service of the loans concluded with the first-named bank, and situated in the region mentioned in Article II of the present Agreement, or for Great Britain to establish control over the sources of revenue guaranteeing the regular service of the loans concluded with the second-named bank, and situated in the region mentioned in Article I of the present Agreement, the British and Russian Governments undertake to enter beforehand into a friendly exchange of ideas with a view to determine, in agreement with each other, the measure of control in question and to avoid all interference which would not be in conformity with the principles governing the present Agreement.¹

¹ Great Britain, Foreign Office Convention signed on August 31, 1907 between Great Britain and Russia containing arrangements on the subject of Persia, Afghanistan, Tibet, Russia No.1 (1907) ed. 3750.

APPENDIX 6

Middle East Economies, Some Comparisons

Table 9 Population, per capita GDP and Growth, 1990

	Population (millions)	1990 GDP Capita \$	Average annual Growth rate 1965-90 (%)
Turkey	56.1	1,630	2.6
(Poland)		(1,690)	
Iran	55.8	2,490	0.1
(Mexico)		(2,490)	
Egypt	52.1	600	4.1
(Zimbabwe)		(640)	
Iraq	18.9		2.6
Saudi Arabia	14.9	7,050	
(Greece)	256.4	(5,990)	
Middle East and North Africa		1,790*	
OECD	776.8	20,170*	
World	5,283.9	4,200*	

* Weighted averages

Table 10 Structure of Production, 1990 (%)

	GDP, 1990 (\$)	Agriculture	Industry	Manufacturin g	Service s
Turkey	96.5	18	33	24	49
Iran	116	21	21	8	58
Egypt	33.2	17	29	16	53
Iraq	-	-	-	-	-
Saudi Arabia	80.9	8	45	9	48

Table 11 Structure of Manufacturing, 1990(%)

	Food Beverages Tobacco	Textiles and Clothing	Machinery Transport Equipment	Chemicals	Others
Turkey	17	15	14	14	41
Iran	23	19	12	7	37
Egypt	31	16	9	8	35
Iraq	-	-	-	-	-
Saudi Arabia	-	-	-	-	-

Table 12 Structure of Merchandise exports, 1990 (%)

	Fuel's and Minerals	Primary Commodities	Machinery and Transport	Other Manufacture	Textiles and Clothing
Turkey	7 (9)	25 (89)	7 (())	61 (2)	37 (1)
Iran	98 (88)	1 (8)	0 (0)	1 (4)	0 (4)
Egypt	41 (8)	20 (71)	0 (0)	39 (20)	27 (15)
Iraq*	98 (95)	0 (4)	1 (0)	1 (1)	0 (0)
Saudi Arabia	88 (98)	1 (1)	0 (1)	11 (1)	0 (0)

* 1989 figures. Figures in () are for 1965.

Table 13 Structure of Merchandise imports, 1990 (%)

	Food	Fuels	Others Commodities	Primary Commodities	Machinery Transport Equipment	Other Manufacturing
Turkey	7 (6)	21 (10)	11 (10)		31 (37)	30 (37)
Iran	12 (16)	0 (0)	5 (6)		44 (36)	38 (42)
Egypt	31 (26)	2 (7)	10 (12)		23 (23)	34 (31)
Iraq*	27 (24)	0 (0)	5 (7)		29 (25)	39 (44)
Saudi Arabia	15 (30)	0 (1)	4 (5)		39 (27)	42 (37)

*1989 Figures. Figures in () are for 1965.

Table 14 Structure of Manufacturing exports to OECD, 1990 (%)

	Textile and Clothing	Chemicals	Electrical Machinery & equipment	Transport Equipment	Other
Turkey	70	4	5	2	20
Iran	93	0	0	0	7
Egypt	53	5	1	18	24
Iraq*	1	19	2	9	69
Saudi Arabia	0	47	5	10	38

* 1989 figures

Sources: World Bank: World Development Report 1992 and World Development Report 1991.

APPENDIX 7

ALGIERS DECLARATION OF MARCH 6, 1975

During the convocation of the OPEC Summit Conference in the Algerian capital and upon the initiative of President Houari Boumediene, the Shah of Iran and Mr. Saddam Hussein, Vice-Chairman of the Revolution Command Council, met twice and conducted lengthy talks on the relations between Iraq and Iran. These talks, attended by President Houari Boumediene, were characterized by complete frankness and the sincere will of both parties to reach a final and permanent solution to all problems existing between their two countries, in accordance with the principles of territorial integrity, border inviolability and non-interference in the internal affairs of others.

The two High Contracting Parties have decided to:

First: Carry out a final delineation of their land boundaries in accordance with the Constantinople Protocol of 1913 and the Proceedings of the Border Delimitation Commission of 1914.

Second: Demarcate their river boundaries according to the Thalweg line.

Third: Accordingly, the two parties shall restore security and mutual confidence along their joint borders. They shall also commit themselves to carrying out a strict and effective observation of their joint borders so as to put a final end to all infiltrations of a subversive nature wherever they may come from.

Fourth: The two parties have also agreed to consider the aforesaid arrangements as inseparable elements of a comprehensive solution. Consequently, any infringement of one of its components shall naturally contradict the spirit of the Algiers Accord. The two parties shall remain in constant contact with President Houari Boumediene, who

shall provide Algeria's brotherly assistance whenever needed in order to apply these resolutions.

The two parties have decided to restore the traditional ties of neighborliness and friendship, in particular by eliminating all negative factors in their relations, through a constant exchange of views on issues of mutual interest and through the promotion of a balanced cooperation.

The two parties officially declare that the region ought to be secure from any foreign interference.

The Foreign Ministers of Iraq and Iran shall meet in the presence of Algeria's Foreign Minister on March 15, 1975 in Teheran in order to make working arrangements for the Iraqi-Iranian joint commission which was set up to apply the resolutions taken by mutual agreement as specified above. And in accordance with the desire of the two parties, Algeria shall be invited to the meetings of the Iraqi-Iranian joint commission. The commission shall determine its agenda, working procedures and hold meetings, if necessary. The meetings shall be alternatively held in Baghdad and Teheran.

His Majesty The Shah of Iran accepted with pleasure the invitation extended to him by His Excellency President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr to pay a state visit to Iraq. The date of the visit shall be fixed by mutual agreement.

On the other hand, Mr. Saddam Hussein agreed to visit Iran officially at a date to be fixed by the two parties.

H.M. The Shah of Iran and Mr. Saddam Hussein have both expressed their deep gratitude to President Houari Boumediene who, motivated by brotherly sentiments and a spirit of disinterestedness, has worked for the establishment of a direct contact between the leaders of the two countries and consequently contributed to reviving a new era in

the Iraqi-Iranian relations, with a view to the higher interest of the future of the region in question.

APPENDIX 8

TREATY CONCERNING THE STATE FRONTIER AND NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS BETWEEN IRAQ AND IRAN SIGNED ON JUNE 13, 1975 AND THE PROTOCOLS ANNEXED THERETO¹

His Imperial Majesty the Shahinshah of Iran,

His Excellency the President of the Republic of Iraq,

Considering the sincere desire of the two Parties, as expressed in the Algiers Agreement of March 6, 1975, to achieve a final and lasting solution to all the problems pending between the two countries,

Considering that the two Parties have carried out the definitive redemarcation of their land frontiers on the basis of the Constantinople Protocol of 1913 and the minutes of the meetings of the Frontier Delimitation Commission of 1914, and have delimited their river frontiers along the Thalweg,

Considering their desire to restore security and mutual trust throughout the length of their common frontier,

Considering the ties of geographical proximity, history, religion, culture and civilization which bind the peoples of Iran and Iraq,

Desirous of strengthening their bonds of friendship and neighborliness, expanding their economic and cultural relations and promoting exchanges and human relations between their peoples on the basis of the principles of territorial integrity, the inviolability of frontiers and non-interference in the internal affairs of others,

¹ This text is taken from that deposited with the United Nations under Article 102 of the Charter under reference Nos 14903 to 14907.

Resolved to work towards the introduction of a new era of friendly relations between Iran and Iraq based on the full respect for the national independence and sovereign equality of States,

Convinced that they are helping thereby to implement the principles and to achieve the purposes and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations,

Have decided to conclude this Treaty and have appointed as their plenipotentiaries:

His Imperial Majesty the Shahinshah of Iran:

His Excellency Abbas Ali Khalatbary,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran.

His Excellency the President of the Republic of Iraq:

His Excellency Saadoun Hammadi,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iraq.

Who, having exchanged their full powers, found to be in good and due form, have agreed as follows:

Article 1

The High Contracting Parties confirm that the State land frontier between Iraq and Iran shall be that which has been redemarcated on the basis of and in accordance with the provisions of the Protocol concerning the redemarcation of the land frontier and the annexes thereto, attached to this Treaty.

Article 2

The High Contracting Parties confirm that the State frontier in the Shatt-al-Arab shall be that which has been delimited on the basis of and in accordance with the provisions of the Protocol concerning the delimitation of the river frontier, and the annexes thereto, attached to this Treaty.

Article 3

The High Contracting Parties undertake to exercise a strict and effective permanent control over the frontier in order to put an end to any infiltration of a subversive nature from any source, on the basis of and in accordance with the provisions of the Protocol concerning frontier security, and the annex thereto, attached to this Treaty.

Article 4

The High Contracting Parties confirm that the provisions of the three Protocols, and the annexes thereto, referred to in Articles 1, 2 and 3 above and attached to this Treaty as an integral part thereof, shall be final and permanent. They shall not be infringed upon under any circumstances and shall constitute the indivisible elements of an overall settlement. Accordingly, a breach of any of the components of this overall settlement shall clearly be incompatible with the spirit of the Algiers Agreement.

Article 5

In keeping with the inviolability of the frontiers of the two States and the strict respect for their territorial integrity, the High Contracting Parties confirm that the course of their land and river frontiers shall be inviolable, permanent and final.

Article 6

1. In the event of a dispute regarding the interpretation or implementation of this Treaty, the three Protocols or the annexes thereto, any solution to such a dispute shall strictly respect the course of the Iraqi-Iranian frontier referred to in Articles 1 and 2 above, and shall take into account the need to maintain security on the Iraqi-Iranian frontier in accordance with Article 3 above.

2. Such disputes shall be resolved in the first instance by the High Contracting Parties, by means of direct bilateral negotiations to be held within two months after the date on which one of the Parties so requested.

3. If no agreement is reached, the High Contracting Parties shall have recourse, within a three-month period, to the good offices of a friendly Third State.

4. Should one of the two Parties refuse to have recourse to good offices or should the good offices procedure fail, the dispute shall be settled by arbitration within a period of not more than one month after the date of such refusal or failure.

5. Should the High Contracting Parties disagree as to the arbitration procedure, one of the High Contracting Parties may have recourse, within 15 days after such disagreement was recorded, to a court of arbitration.

With a view to establishing such a court of arbitration, each of the High Contracting Parties shall, in respect to each dispute to be resolved, appoint one of its citizens as arbitrator and the two arbitrators shall choose an umpire. Should the High Contracting Parties fail to appoint their arbitrators within one month after the date on which one of the Parties received a request for arbitration from the other Party, or should the arbitrators fail to reach an agreement on the choice of the umpire before that time limit expires, the High Contracting Party which requested arbitration shall be entitled to request the President of the International Court of Justice to appoint the

arbitrators or the umpire, in accordance with the procedures of the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

6. The decision of the court of arbitration shall be binding and enforceable by the High Contracting Parties.

7. The High Contracting Parties shall each defray half the costs of arbitration.

Article 7

This Treaty, the three Protocols and the Annexes thereto, shall be registered in accordance with Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Article 8

This Treaty, the three Protocols and the Annexes thereto, shall be ratified by each of the High Contracting Parties in accordance with its domestic law.

This Treaty, the three Protocols and the Annexes thereto, shall enter into force on the date of exchange of the instruments of ratification in Teheran.

In witness whereof the Plenipotentiaries of the High Contracting Parties have signed this Treaty, the three Protocols and the Annexes thereto.

Done in Baghdad, on June 13, 1975.

(Signed)

Abbas Ali Khalatbary

Minister of Foreign Affairs
of Iran

(Signed)

Saadoun Hammadi

Minister of Foreign Affairs
of Iraq

This Treaty, the three Protocols and the Annexes thereto, were signed in the presence of His Excellency Abdel-Aziz Bouteflika, Member of the Council of the Revolution and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Algeria.

**PROTOCOL CONCERNING THE REDMARCATION OF THE LAND FRONTIER
BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ**

Pursuant to the provisions of the Algiers communiqué of March 6, 1975, the two Contracting Parties have agreed to the following:

Article 1

A. The Two Contracting Parties affirm and recognise that the redemarcation of the State land frontier between Iran and Iraq was a field operation performed by the mixed Iraqi-Iranian-Algerian Committee on the basis of the following:

1. The Constantinople Protocol of 1913 and the minutes of the meetings of the 1914 Commission to delimit the Turco-Persian frontier;
2. The Teheran Protocol dated March 17, 1975;
3. The record of the meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, signed at Baghdad on April 20, 1975 and approving, *inter alia*, the report of the Committee to Demarcate the Land Frontier, signed at Teheran on March 30, 1975;
4. The record of the meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, signed at Algiers on May 20, 1975;
5. The descriptive record of operations in the demarcation of the land frontier between Iran and Iraq, prepared by the Committee to Demarcate the Land Frontier and dated June 13, 1975. The record constitutes Annex 1 and is an integral part of this Protocol;
6. Maps on the scale 1:50,000 indicating the land frontier line and the position of the old and new frontier marks. The maps constitute Annex 2 and are an integral part of this Protocol;
7. Record cards of the old and new frontier marks;
8. A document giving the coordinates of the frontier marks;

9. Aerial photographs of the Iraqi-Iranian frontier strip indicating the positions of the old and new frontier marks.

B. The two Parties undertake to complete the demarcation of the frontier between frontier marks No. 14A and No. 15 within two months.

C. The two Contracting Parties shall cooperate in producing aerial photographs of the Iranian-Iraqi land frontier with a view to using them in plotting the frontier on maps scaled 1:25,000, indicating the position of the frontier marks. This work shall be completed within a period not exceeding one year taking effect May 20, 1975, and shall be without prejudice to the entry into force of the Treaty of which this Protocol is an integral part.

The descriptive record relating to the land frontier and referred to in paragraph 5 above shall be amended accordingly.

The maps produced pursuant to the present section C shall supersede all existing maps.

Article 2

The State land frontier between Iraq and Iran shall follow the line indicated in the descriptive record and the maps referred to respectively in paragraphs 5 and 6 of Article 1 above, with due regard to the provisions of section C of that Article.

Article 3

The frontier line defined in Articles 1 and 2 of this Protocol shall also divide the air space and the subsoil vertically.

Article 4

The two Contracting Parties shall establish a Mixed Iraqi-Iranian Commission to settle, in a neighborly and cooperative spirit, the status of landed property,

constructions, or technical or other installations whose national character may be changed by the redemarcation of the land frontier between Iraq and Iran. Such settlement shall be by means of repurchase compensation or any other appropriate formula, with a view to eliminating any source of litigation.

The Commission shall settle the status of State property within two months. Claims concerning private property shall be submitted to it within two months. The status of this private property shall be settled within the following three months.

Article 5

1. A Mixed Commission composed of representatives of the competent authorities of the two States shall be established to inspect the frontier marks and determine their condition.

The Commission shall make this inspection annually, in September, in accordance with a timetable which it shall prepare beforehand within an appropriate period of time.

2. Either Contracting Party may request the other in writing to have the Commission carry out, at any time, an additional inspection of the frontier marks. In the event of such a request, the inspection shall be made within a period not exceeding 30 days after the date of the request.

3. Whenever an inspection is made, the Mixed Commission shall prepare the relevant reports and submit them under its signature to the competent authorities of each of the two States. The Commission may, if need be, call for the construction of new frontier marks according to the specifications of the existing ones, provided that the course of the frontier line is not thereby altered. Where new frontier marks are constructed, the competent authorities of the two States shall check the frontier marks and their coordinates against the relevant maps and documents referred to in Article 1 of

this Protocol. The authorities shall then position the frontier-marks under the supervision of the Mixed Commission, which shall prepare a record of the operation and submit it to the competent authorities of each of the two States so that it may be annexed to the documents referred to in Article 1 of this Protocol.

4. The two Contracting Parties shall be jointly responsible for the maintenance of the frontier marks.

5. The Mixed Commission shall be responsible for replacing displaced frontier marks and reconstructing destroyed or missing marks, on the basis of the maps and documents referred to in Article 1 of this Protocol, taking care not to alter the position of the marks, under any circumstances. In such cases, the Mixed Commission shall prepare a record of the operation and submit it to the competent authorities of each of the two States.

6. The competent authorities of each of the two States shall exchange information on the condition of the frontier marks with a view to finding the best ways and means of protecting and maintaining them.

7. The two Contracting Parties undertake to take all necessary steps to protect the frontier marks and prosecute individuals who have moved, damaged or destroyed them.

Article 6

The two Contracting Parties have agreed that the provisions of this Protocol, signed without any reservation, shall henceforth govern any matter relating to the frontier between Iran and Iraq. On this basis, they solemnly undertake to respect their common and definitive frontier.

Done in Baghdad, on June 13, 1975.

(Signed)

Abbas Ali Khalatbary

Minister of Foreign Affairs
of Iran

(Signed)

Saadoun Hammadi

Minister of Foreign Affairs
of Iraq

Signed in the presence of His Excellency Abdel-Aziz Bouteflika, Member of the
Council of the Revolution, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Algeria.

**PROTOCOL CONCERNING THE DELIMITATION OF THE RIVER FRONTIER
BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ**

Pursuant to the decisions taken in the Algiers communiqué of March 6, 1975,

The two Contracting Parties have agreed as follows:

Article 1

The two Contracting Parties hereby declare and recognize that the State river frontier between Iran and Iraq in the Shatt al-Arab has been delimited along the Thalweg by the Mixed Iraqi-Iranian-Algerian Committee on the basis of the following:

1. The Teheran Protocol of March 17, 1975;
2. The record of the Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, signed at Baghdad on April 20, 1975, approving, *inter alia*, the report of the Committee to Delimit the River Frontier, signed on April 16, 1975 on Board the Iraqi ship *El Thawra* in the Shatt al-Arab;
3. Common hydrographic charts, which have been verified on the spot and corrected and on which the geographical coordinates of the 1975 frontier crossing points have been indicated; these charts have been signed by the hydrographic experts of the Mixed Technical Commission and countersigned by the heads of the Iranian, Iraqi and Algerian delegations to the Committee. The said charts, listed hereafter, are annexed to this Protocol and form an integral part thereof:

Chart No.1: Entrance to Shatt al-Arab, No.3842, published by the British Admiralty;

Chart No.2: Inner Bar to Kabda Point, No.3843, published by the British Admiralty;

Chart No.3: Kabda Point to Abadan, No.3844, published by the British Admiralty;

Chart No.4: Abadan to Jazirat Ummat Tuwaylah, No.3845, published by the British Admiralty.

Article 2

1. The frontier line in the Shatt al-Arab shall follow the Thalweg, i.e. the median line of the main navigable channel at the lowest navigable level, starting from the point at which the land frontier between Iran and Iraq enters the Shatt al-Arab and continuing to the sea.

2. The frontier line, as defined in paragraph 1 above, shall vary with changes brought about by natural causes in the main navigable channel. The frontier line shall not be affected by other changes unless the two Contracting Parties conclude a special agreement to that effect.

3. The occurrence of any of the changes referred to in paragraph 2 above shall be attested jointly by the competent technical authorities of the two Contracting Parties.

4. Any change in the bed of the Shatt al-Arab brought about by natural causes which would involve a change in the national character of the two States' respective territories or of landed property, constructions, or technical or other installations, shall not change the course of the frontier line which shall continue to follow the Thalweg in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1 above.

5. Unless an agreement is reached between the two Contracting Parties concerning the transfer of the frontier line to the new bed, the water shall be re-directed at the joint expense of both Parties to the bed existing in 1975 as marked on the four common charts listed in Article 1, paragraph 3, above – should one of the Parties so request within two years after the date on which the occurrence of the change was attested by either of the two Parties. Until such time, both Parties shall retain their previous rights of navigation and of user over the water of the new bed.

Article 3

1. The river frontier between Iran and Iraq in the Shatt al-Arab, as defined in Article 2 above, is represented by the relevant line drawn on the common charts referred to in Article 1, paragraph 3, above.

2. The two Contracting Parties have agreed to consider that the river frontier shall end at the straight line connecting the two banks of the Shatt al-Arab, at its mouth, at the astronomical lowest low-water mark. This straight line has been indicated on the common hydrographic charts referred to in Article 1, paragraph 3, above.

Article 4

The frontier line as defined in Articles 1, 2 and 3 of this Protocol shall also divide the air space and the subsoil vertically.

Article 5

With a view to eliminating any source of controversy, the two Contracting Parties shall establish a Mixed Iraqi-Iranian Commission to settle within two months any questions concerning the status of landed property, constructions, or technical or other installations, the national character of which may be affected by the delimitation of the Iranian-Iraqi river frontier, either through repurchase or compensation or any other suitable arrangement.

Article 6

Since the task of surveying the Shatt al-Arab has been completed and the common hydrographic chart referred to in Article 1, paragraph 3 above has been drawn up, the two Contracting Parties have agreed that a new survey of the Shatt al-Arab shall be carried out jointly, once every 10 years, with effect from the date of signature of this

Protocol. However, each of the two Parties shall have the right to request new surveys, to be carried out jointly, before the expiry of the 10 year period.

The two Contracting Parties shall each defray half the cost of such surveys.

Article 7

1. Merchant vessels, State vessels and warships of the two Contracting Parties shall enjoy freedom of navigation in the Shatt al-Arab and in any part of the navigable channels in the territorial sea which lead to the mouth of the Shatt al-Arab, irrespective of the line delimiting the territorial sea of each of the two countries.

2. Vessels of third countries used for purposes of trade shall enjoy freedom of navigation, on an equal and non-discriminatory basis, in the Shatt al-Arab and in any part of the navigable channels in the territorial sea which lead to the mouth of the Shatt al-Arab, irrespective of the line delimiting the territorial seas of each of the two countries.

3. Either of the two Contracting Parties may authorize foreign warships visiting its ports to enter the Shatt al-Arab, provided such vessels do not belong to a country in a state of belligerency, armed conflict or war with either of the two Contracting Parties, and provided the other Party is so notified no less than 72 hours in advance.

4. The two Contracting Parties shall in every case refrain from authorizing the entry to the Shatt al-Arab of merchant vessels belonging to a country in a state of belligerency, armed conflict or war with either of the two parties.

Article 8

1. Rules governing navigation in the Shatt al-Arab shall be drawn up by a mixed Iranian-Iraqi Commission, in accordance with the principle of equal rights of navigation for both States.

2. The two Contracting Parties shall establish a Commission to draw up rules governing the prevention and control of pollution in the Shatt al-Arab.

3. The two Contracting Parties undertake to conclude subsequent agreements on the questions referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article.

Article 9

The two Contracting Parties recognize that the Shatt al-Arab is primarily an international waterway, and undertake to refrain from any operation that might hinder navigation in the Shatt al-Arab or in any part of those navigable channels in the territorial sea of either of the two countries that lead to the mouth of the Shatt al-Arab.

Done in Baghdad, on June 13, 1975.

(Signed)

Abbas Ali Khalatbary

Minister of Foreign Affairs
of Iran

(Signed)

Saadoun Hammadi

Minister of Foreign Affairs
of Iraq

Signed in the presence of His Excellency Abdel-Aziz Bouteflika, Member of the Council of the Revolution and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Algeria.

**PROTOCOL CONCERNING SECURITY ON THE FRONTIER BETWEEN
IRAN AND IRAQ**

In accordance with the decisions contained in the Algiers' Agreement of March 6, 1975,

Anxious to re-establish mutual security and trust throughout the length of their common frontier,

Resolved to exercise strict and effective control over that frontier in order to put an end to any infiltration of a subversive nature, and, to that end, to establish close cooperation between themselves and to prevent any infiltration or illegal movement across their common frontier for the purpose of causing subversion, insubordination or rebellion,

Referring to the Teheran Protocol of March 15, 1975, the record of the meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, signed in Baghdad on April 20, 1975, and the record of the meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, signed in Algiers on May 20, 1975,

The two Contracting Parties have agreed as follows:

Article 1

1. The two Contracting Parties shall exchange information on any movement by subversive elements which may attempt to infiltrate one of the two countries with a view to committing acts of subversion, insubordination or rebellion.

2. The two Contracting Parties shall take the necessary steps with regard to the movements of the elements referred to in paragraph 1 above.

They shall inform each other immediately of the identity of such persons, on the understanding that they shall do their utmost to prevent those persons from committing acts of subversion.

The same steps shall be taken with regard to any persons who may assemble within the territory of one of the two Contracting Parties with the intention of committing acts of subversion or sabotage in the territory of the other Party.

Article 2

The many forms of cooperation established between the competent authorities of the two Contracting Parties relating to the closing of frontiers to prevent infiltration by subversive elements shall be instituted by the frontier authorities of the two countries, and shall be pursued up to the highest levels in the Ministries of Defense, Foreign Affairs and the Interior of each of the two Parties.

Article 3

The infiltration points likely to be used by subversive elements are as follows:

1. Northern frontier zone

From the point of intersection of the Iranian, Turkish and Iraqi frontiers to (and including) Khanaqin – Qasr-e-Shirin: 21 points.

2. Southern frontier zone

From (but not including) Khanaqin – Qasr-e-Shirin to the end of the Iranian-Iraqi frontier: 17 points.

3. The above infiltration points are named in the annex.

4. The points specified above shall be supplemented by any other infiltration point which may be discovered and will have to be closed and controlled.

5. All frontier crossing points except those currently controlled by the customs authorities shall be closed.

6. In the interest of promoting relations of all kinds between the two neighboring countries, the two Contracting Parties have agreed that, in the future, other crossing points controlled by the customs authorities shall be created by common consent.

Article 4

1. The two Contracting Parties undertake to provide the necessary human and material resources to ensure the effective closure and control of their frontiers, so as to prevent any infiltration by subversive elements through the crossing points mentioned in Article 3 above.

2. If, in the light of experience gained in this matter, experts should decide that more effective measures must be taken, the corresponding procedures shall be established at monthly meetings of the frontier authorities of the two countries, or at meetings between those authorities, should the need arise.

The conclusions and records of such meetings shall be communicated to the higher authorities of each of the two Parties. Should there be disagreement between the frontier authorities, the heads of the administrations concerned shall meet in either Baghdad or Teheran to reconcile the points of view and draw up a record of the outcome of their meetings.

Article 5

1. Any subversive persons who may be arrested shall be handed over to the competent authorities of the Party in whose territory they were arrested and shall be subject to the legislation in force.

2. The two Contracting Parties shall inform one another of the measures taken against persons referred to in paragraph 1 above.

3. Should subversive persons cross the frontier in an attempt to escape, the authorities of the other country shall be informed immediately and shall take all necessary steps to apprehend such persons.

Article 6

In case of need and where the two Contracting Parties so agree, entry to certain areas may be declared prohibited in order to prevent subversive persons from carrying out their intentions.

Article 7

In order to establish and promote cooperation which is mutually beneficial to both Parties, a permanent Mixed Committee comprising the heads of the frontier authorities and representatives of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the two countries shall be established and shall hold two sessions a year (at the beginning of each half of the calendar year).

At the request of one of the two Parties, however, special meeting smay be held to consider how intellectual and material resources might be better used for the closure and control of the frontiers and to review the effectiveness and proper implementation of the basic provisions governing cooperation as provided for in this Protocol.

Article 8

The provisions of this Protocol relating to the closure and control of the frontier shall be without prejudice to the provisions of specific agreements between Iran and Iraq concerning grazing rights and frontier commissioners.

Article 9

With a view to guaranteeing the security of the common river frontier in the Shatt al-Arab and preventing the infiltration of subversive elements from either side, the two Contracting Parties shall take such appropriate steps as the installation of lookout posts and the detachment of patrol boats.

Done in Baghdad, on June 13, 1975.

(Signed)

Abbas Ali Khalatbary

Minister of Foreign Affairs
of Iran

(Signed)

Saadoun Hammadi

Minister of Foreign Affairs
of Iraq

Signed in the presence of H.E. A.A. Bouteflika Minister of Foreign Affairs of Algeria.

APPENDIX 9

THE SITUATION BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ¹

Decisions

On 16 January, 1987, after consultations, the President made the following statement on behalf of the members of the Council.²

"In consultations, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the members of the Council;

"The members of the Security Council are dismayed and profoundly concerned by the fact that, in the period which has elapsed since the statement made by the President of the Council on 22 December 1986,³ hostilities between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq have intensified and the risk that the armed conflict, now more than six years old, may pose a further threat to the security of the region has increased.

"The large-scale military operations which have taken place since the end of last December, and which continue at this time, and the parties' repeated allegations of serious and recurrent violations of the norms of international humanitarian law and other laws of armed conflict clearly indicate the considerable escalation in recent weeks of this conflict, which has taken the lives of countless persons, both combatants and civilians, and has caused grievous human suffering and heavy material losses. The members of the Council reiterate their serious concerns over the widening of the conflict through increased attacks on purely civilian targets.

¹ Resolution or decisions on this question were also adopted by the Council in 1980, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985 and 1986.

² S/18610.

³ See *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council, 1986*, p. 13.

"In view of this critical situation, the members of the Council, recalling the statements made on behalf of the Council on 21 March⁴ and 22 December 1986, again issue an urgent appeal to the parties to comply with Council resolutions 582 (1986) and 588 (1986). In this context, they appreciate the efforts made by the Secretary-General and urge him to persevere in those efforts.

"The Security Council, on which the Members of the United Nations have conferred primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, will remain seized of the situation and will continue to make every effort to bring about the cessation of hostilities and the resolution of the conflict by peaceful means in accordance with the Charter."

On 14 May 1987, after consultation, the President made the following statement on behalf of the members of the Council:⁵

"The members of the Security Council, seized with the continuing conflict between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq, have considered the report of the mission of specialists dispatched by the Secretary-General to investigate allegations of the use of chemical weapons in the conflict."⁶

"Deeply dismayed by the unanimous conclusions of the specialists that there has been repeated use of chemical weapons against Iranian forces, by Iraqi forces, that civilians in Iran also have been injured by chemical weapons, and that Iraqi military personnel have sustained injuries from chemical warfare agents, they again strongly condemn the repeated use of chemical weapons in open violation of the Geneva Protocol of 1925⁷ in which the use of chemical weapons in war is clearly prohibited.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁵ S/18863.

⁶ *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-second Year: Supplement for April, May and June 1987*, document S/18852.

⁷ League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. XCIV (1929), No. 2138.

"Recalling the statements made by the President of the Council on 30 March 1984,⁸ 25 April 1985 and 21 March 1986,⁹ they again emphatically demand that the provisions of the Geneva Protocol be strictly respected and observed.

"They also condemn the prolongation of the conflict which, in addition to violations of international humanitarian law, continues to exact an appalling toll of human life, to cause heavy material damage in the two States, and to endanger peace and security in the region.

"They express grave concern over the dangers of an extension of the conflict to other States in the region.

"They reiterate their call for respect for the territorial integrity of all States in the region.

"They reaffirm resolution 582 (1986) and call on both parties to co-operate with the efforts of the Security Council to open the way to an early settlement of the conflict on the basis of justice and honour.

"They express support for the Secretary-General's efforts to restore peace to the peoples of Iran and Iraq and call on both States to respond positively to his efforts."

At its 2750th meeting, on 20 July 1987, the Council decided to invite the representatives of Iraq to participate, without vote, in the discussion of the item entitled "The situation between Iran and Iraq"

⁸ See *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council, 1984*, p.10.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 1985, pp. 6 and 7.

Resolution 598 (1987) of 20 July 1987

The Security Council,

Reaffirming its resolution 582 (1986),

Deeply concerned that, despite its calls for a cease-fire, the conflict between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq continues unabated, with further heavy loss of human life and material destruction.

Deploring the initiation and continuation of the conflict.

Deploring also the bombing of purely civilian population centres, attacks on neutral shipping or civilian aircraft, the violation of international humanitarian law and other laws of armed conflict, and, in particular, the use of chemical weapons contrary to obligations under the 1925 Geneva Protocol.¹⁰

Deeply concerned that further escalation and widening of the conflict may take place.

Determined to bring to an end all military actions between Iran and Iraq.

Convinced that a comprehensive, just, honourable and durable settlement should be achieved between Iran and Iraq.

Recalling the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular the obligation of all Member States to settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered.

Determining that there exists a breach of the peace as regards the conflict between Iran and Iraq.

Acting under Articles 39 and 40 of the Charter.

1. *Demands* that, as a first step towards a negotiated settlement, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq observe an immediate cease-fire, discontinue all military actions on land, at sea and in air, and withdraw all forces to the internationally recognized boundaries without delay.

¹⁰ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 972.

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to dispatch a team of United Nations observers to verify, confirm and supervise the cease-fire and withdrawal and further requests the Secretary-General to make the necessary arrangements in consultation with the Parties and to submit a report thereon to the Security Council.
3. *Urges* that prisoners-of-war be released and repatriated without delay after the cessation of active hostilities in accordance with the Third Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949.
4. *Calls upon* Iran and Iraq to co-operate with the Secretary-General in implementing this resolution and in mediation efforts to achieve a comprehensive, just and honourable settlement, acceptable to both sides, of all outstanding issues, in accordance with the principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations.
5. *Calls upon* all other States to exercise the utmost restraint and to refrain from any act which may lead to further escalation and widening of the conflict, and thus to facilitate the implementation of the present resolution.
6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to explore, in consultation with Iran and Iraq, the question of entrusting an impartial body with inquiring into responsibility for the conflict and to report to the Council as soon as possible.
7. *Recognizes* the magnitude of the damage inflicted during the conflict and the need for reconstruction efforts, with appropriate international assistance, once the conflict is ended and, in this regard, requests the Secretary-General to assign a team of experts, to study the question of reconstruction and to report to the Council.
8. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to examine, in consultation with Iran and Iraq and with other States of the region, measures to enhance the security and stability of the region.
9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to keep the Council informed on the implementation of this resolution.
10. *Decides* to meet again as necessary to consider further steps to ensure compliance with this resolution.

Adopted unanimously at the 2750th meeting

Decision

At its 1779th meeting, on 24 December 1987, the Council proceeded with the discussion of the item entitled "The situation between Iran and Iraq".

At the same meeting, the President made the following statement:¹¹

"After consultations, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the members of the Council:

"The members of the Security Council take note of the assessment made by the Secretary-General to the Council on 10 December 1987 following his consultations with the emissaries of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq concerning the implementation of resolution 598 (1987) as well as of his request for a fresh and resolute impulse from the Council. They express their grave concern over the slow pace and lack of real progress in these consultations.

"Determined to bring the conflict to an end as soon as possible, they reaffirm their commitment to resolution 598 (1987) as an integrated whole. They also reaffirm that the implementation of that resolution is the only basis for a comprehensive, just, honourable and durable settlement of the conflict.

"They support the Secretary-General's outline plan, as endorsed by the Council, as well as his efforts to implement resolution 598 (1987).

"They consider it essential that the Secretary-General continue to fulfil the mandate assigned to him by resolution 598 (1987).

"They declare their determination, in accordance with paragraph 10 of resolution 598 (1987), to consider further steps to ensure compliance with this resolution."

¹¹ S/19382

APPENDIX 10

PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS

In the process of this study I have always wanted to integrate my own personal observations and relevant experiences as an army officer into this research. These observations, which are somehow connected to relations between Iran and Iraq, cover two rather short periods of the past forty years which I spent in the border area between these two countries.

First, in 1958, after the demise of the old Faisal dynasty regime in Iraq: the Iranian government decided to reinforce its military units along the borders with Iraq. To this end my artillery unit in Isfahan and some other military units from other parts of the country were despatched to the border area between Iran and Iraq. The task of these units was to react immediately and precisely against any threat coming from the revolutionary government in Baghdad.

My first involvement in the Iran and Iraq border developments as a junior officer was minute, as it was for the other officers of the same rank; but all of us knew that we were practically involved in some kind of local political and social developments. The newly established fifth infantry division in Khaneh (a city close to the border) was not only assigned to defend the area under its control in case of outside threats, but also to mix with the inhabitants in a way that could be named public relations engagements. This policy combined with the military exercises in which the Kurdish leaders were the guests of honour, could - to some extent - ameliorate the damages inflicted on relations between Tehran and the Republic of Mahabad during the 1940s. Although the military exercise is basically routine for a large military unit like a division, these exercises were also tacitly conveying the power of the government establishment. During these exercises we had some visitors coming from the U.S. House of Representatives. At the time, the Americans were keen to find out the ability of the Iranian Army to resist any threat coming from Iraq.

In fact, these frequent delegations were analysing the real impact of their country's military aid on Iran's defensive capabilities.

However, working and living under these conditions, where the international conflict is a possibility and the actual jurisdiction of neighbouring countries over their territories is rather fluid and people under an unstable and non-productive economy are inclined to unlawful activities, was quite an experience. Although these circumstances could be somewhat relevant to border areas in most parts of the world, here because of continual conflicts for centuries, especially in the time of the Ottoman Empire, the inhabitants of the disputed lands, who had been living under constant changes of loyalties to the victorious power, were suspicious of every move of government authorities in the region. The Kurds in Iran, because of their common historical background and their cultural similarities with Iran, they are more inclined towards loyalty to this country: nonetheless suspicion seems to be a heritage of their turbulent history. This attitude has been reinforced, when most decisions affecting the situation on the ground are taken by the authorities in positions physically and mentally far from the realities on the ground.

Although the armed forces of the two countries were not engaged directly at that time, clandestine operations - including small arms smuggling, giving financial support and expertise - were carried out against each other. These were routine, at least for the officers who were informed as circumstances developed. Considering the friendlier relations of the Kurds with the Iranian army units and authorities, it is worth noting that the Kurds' relations with the Iraqi authorities were less friendly and occasionally more conflictual. This would imply that the covert operations carried out by Iran against Iraq were more intensive than those of Iraq against Iran. The 1960s and early 1970s events, which were the continuation of previous developments, supports this theory, especially when the American and Israeli involvements are taken into account.

For me, these political, social and conflictual developments in this region were, to some extent, influenced by two old and new historical processes. The more

friendly relations of the Kurds with Iran, compared to those with Iraq, although suspicious, could be somehow translated into the Kurds history which goes back 3,000 years. According to this history the Kurds (Medes) with the Persians were the two main Aryan tribes, which settled in the eastern part of Mesopotamia during the seventh and eighth centuries BC. According to Herodotos, the Medes chose "Dejaces" as their first king and established themselves as a legitimate power ruling the rest of the Aryans, including the Persian tribe. Their capital city "Akbaton" that still exists as a prosperous and beautiful city of modern Iran called "Hamadan", symbolises the intimate and inseparable historical tie between Iran and the Kurds. Although the Medes expanded their rule to Asian Minor, they became weak because of constant conflicts with the Assyrians and eventually the Persians – the Achaemedians – succeeded them and extended their rule to the Eastern Mediterranean region.

Thus, the history of the Medes is, in fact, if not the core, then the backbone of Iranian history. This nation has suffered for thousands of years in defending Iran from Assyrian, Byzantine and Ottoman threats. The rivalries between Iran and the Ottomans first and the weakening of the Ottomans by European powers divided them further between several countries. History is repeating itself and the destiny of this nation is a prey in the hands of the authoritarian regional powers and western interests. As long as the countries in which the Kurds are living do not have democratic governments which allow their nations to have autonomous status, there will be no hope for the end of the present suffering of this condemned nation.

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My second involvement in the Iraq-Iran relations was in 1975 in connection with the demarcation between these two countries. At 10 o'clock on 10th March, 1975, which happened to be the weekend, my telephone rang. It was the Deputy Commanding Officer of the army aviation base in Isfahan, Col. Sarkhosh, who wanted me to see him in 30 minutes at his headquarters. I met him on time and he handed me a secret telegraph in which the Army Aviation Commanding Officer,

General Khosrowdad had ordered Col. Sarkhosh to dispatch at least 10 UH1 helicopters to Mehran – a city in the border where the demarcation teams were located – immediately that same day. In the telegraph I was chosen as the Commanding Officer of the aviation unit supporting the demarcation teams and I had to report my arrival time to the army aviation headquarters in Tehran as soon as possible. The telegraph was signed by General Khosrowdad with the remark, "His Majesty, the King wanted to know the arrival time of this unit in Mehran".

This type of military operation, is usually planned at least days ahead: so in its timing it was surprising and showed the willingness and at the same time the urgency of the mission felt by the Iranian authorities, including the Shah himself. Perhaps the Shah knew the difficulties ahead at the international level and therefore, wanted the Treaty to come to life, free from any possible hindrance, as soon as possible.

Chapter eight of this study shows how the Shah and Saddam Hussein were co-operating during these crucial relations between the two countries. During the informal negotiations with the Iraqi team, I learned they had been under the same pressure as their Iranian counterparts to start the work immediately. The mutual understanding and respect felt by the two countries' leaders towards each other characterised the speed, smoothness and enthusiastic execution of the demarcation. Dr. Ghasemi told me, "When at some stage we realized that the numbers of the signposts envisaged in the Treaty were unnecessarily high, a team of experts, including myself, flew to Iraq to discuss the Iranian point of view with our counterparts in Baghdad. Their Foreign Ministry, though agreeing with us, wanted us to put forward our opinions directly to Saddam Hussein. The first question he asked was - what is the Shah of Iran's opinion? We replied, "The Shah of Iran does not interfere with the experts views." Then he paused and said - what ever His Majesty the Shah decides, is acceptable to us. (Personal Observation, London, 25th January, 2001.)

The 1958 Revolution changed the political social systems in Iraq dramatically. The move by the Iranian government to recognise the new regime in Iraq immediately

did not alter the old Iraqi view towards Iran. The Shatt al-Arab issue remained the main stumbling block to good relations between the two countries. These relations during the presidency of Abd al-Karim Qasim worsened.

From 1963 onwards, the Arifs' governments were more sensible in relations with Iran. But, in spite of many statesmen visiting each others countries, no progress was made. When Iran annulled the 1937 Treaty in 1969, the border clashes intensified and one Iraqi aircraft, invading Iranian air space, was shot down by Iran's anti-air missile forces. General Jam, the then Iranian Armed Forces Chief of Staff, told me, "When the Iraqi aircraft was shot down, I summoned the Iraqi Military Attaché and told him: 'if this action happens again, we will declare war against your country'. Then we started to prepare an offensive operation plan against Iraq. We took the Shah, who was coming from abroad, directly to General Headquarters explaining our plan. The Shah listened carefully, and at the end of the session, while leaving the room, said: 'You fools, continue preparing your plans. But remember; the world's largest refinery in Abadan was built up during the last 80 years, and it would be on fire in the first hour of war between Iran and Iraq". (Personal observation, London, 28th January, 2000).

As mentioned, when the 1937 Treaty was annulled, the armed forces of both countries marched to their respective borders. The army aviation of the Iranian ground forces was responsible for supporting these forces by air, wherever needed. I, as a pilot and at the same time as a Commanding Officer, was involved in these kinds of operations. This involvement continued until 1975, the year in which the Algiers Accord was announced.

In fact my military career partly evolved in response to the circumstances affecting Iran-Iraq relations. Therefore, my enthusiasm and perseverance for this research is not surprising.

However, the land border in the Algiers Agreement was based on the 1913 Constantinople Protocol. After 62 years (1913 – 1975) some of the 146 signposts constructed in 1914 had been removed or wiped out by natural causes. Because of

these changes, and under the new demarcation processes, the ownership of some property - land, buildings, private and public installations - which were wrongly located in the country contrary to the owner's nationality, had to be changed. Each side agreed to compensate their subjects' losses and the Algerian team was to locate the positions of the signposts which had disappeared. The careful co-operation between the three demarcation teams, especially between the Iranian and Iraqi teams, was remarkable and a sign of better relations in the future, as the Algiers Accord envisaged.

Participation by both sides in the demarcation processes seemed to indicate that the politics in the Middle East was in principle not different from politics elsewhere. However, the nature of the region, the nature of the culture and that of the leaders in general make the political processes taking place there different and often in unusual ways. The Algiers Accord, which was a proper response to 500 years of conflict and a sign of wisdom and responsibility, could not hold for long. This time the behaviour of the leaders, on both sides, destroyed the outcome. Although Saddam Hussein accepted the Accord openly and formally, relations between the two countries are not as good as they were even before 1975. If the peoples of these two countries were allowed to choose their future, they would no doubt bring tranquillity and friendship instead of misery and conflict. As Halliday¹ has rightly noted, for Iranians the way to exit from the present dilemma is a democratic shift drawing on our ancient culture, which contains all the ingredients necessary to living in the contemporary world.

¹ Halliday, Fred. *Post-Akhundism: some tentative notes in Iran and Eurasia*, edited by Ali Mohammadi and Anoushirvan Ehteshami, (Attica Press, London, 2000) pp.19-34.

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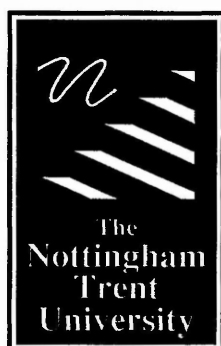
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