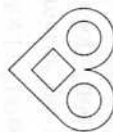

*THE ARAB MIDDLE EAST: ARABISM, MILITARY
STATES, AND ISLAM*



Though the Arab fertile crescent countries also had their origins in the Ottoman empire, they would develop in a different way. In the case of Turkey, the state absorbed European influences, assumed control of the reconstruction of Turkish society, and maintained its historical institutional pattern. In the Arab fertile crescent there was no history of independent states, no unified and continuing governing elite, and only the beginnings of national political movements. By the time Arab identities took form in the twentieth century they were replete with unresolved tensions among national states, ethnic identities, and Islam.

NOTABLES AND THE RISE OF ARAB NATIONALISM

The modern Arab state system and the Arab nationalist movements had their origins in the nineteenth-century Ottoman system and in the pattern of European influences on the fertile crescent. The Ottomans had ruled the fertile crescent as a number of separate small provinces. In this region, there were no units of territorial government corresponding to the Ottoman sub-states in Egypt, Tunisia, or Algeria. The principal cities, such as Damascus, Aleppo, Mosul, and Baghdad, were the main centers of government and were often the only areas under government control. In the absence of territorial states, fertile crescent societies were fragmented into family, tribal, ethnic, linguistic, religious, guild, and residential communities. Reinforcing this diversity, European influences had different impacts in different parts of the region. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries European trade stimulated the economic changes that led to the formation of new elites. European cultural and educational influences helped give rise to a new "nationalist" political consciousness, and European intervention created the divisions into national states that have lasted to the present day.

As early as the eighteenth century European influences stimulated important changes in the Maronite Church. Until the middle of the eighteenth century, the

church had been in the control of lay Maronite landlords who appointed the Patriarch and the bishops. Eighteenth-century reformers, led by churchmen educated in Rome, attempted to free the church from lay control. The reformers established a system of church schools and attempted to propagandize the populace in favor of a church-led Maronite government. The political consequences of the Maronite revival were formidable. In 1820 there was a peasant revolt against the feudal landlords. The Maronite movement led also to increasing tension with the Druzes, who, in response to Maronite pressure, became more organized and unified. The policies of Bashir II (1788–1840), overlord of Lebanon, polarized the situation. Bashir tried to centralize power and eliminate his rivals, mainly Druze chieftains. He defeated the Druzes in 1825, and cooperated with the Egyptian invasion of Syria and Lebanon in 1831. In 1840, however, Britain and France intervened to evict the Egyptians. Bashir was removed from power, but the Maronites and Druzes remained divided and the country was ungovernable. There were Maronite–Druze wars in 1838, 1841–42, and 1845.

The Ottomans established a new government in 1843, but it lasted only until 1858, when the Maronite populace again rebelled against its feudal lords. Druze–Muslim wars against the Maronites resumed in 1859 and 1860. In 1861 the European powers forced the Ottomans to recognize Christian predominance. Under new regulations, the head of government, or *mutasarrif*, was to be a Christian, while a governing council represented the other religious communities. Lebanon became a privileged province within the Ottoman empire, with the European powers guaranteeing its security.

European influence in regional politics was accompanied by direct educational efforts. France sponsored a vigorous educational program. French Jesuits established a school at Aintura in 1728 and Maronite colleges were established at Zigharta (1735) and Ayn Warqa (1789). The Syrian Protestant College, which eventually became the American University of Beirut, was founded in 1866. Zahleh, Damascus, and Aleppo acquired new schools between 1839 and 1873. The French-sponsored University of St. Joseph was established in 1875.

In the nineteenth century trade between Europe, Lebanon, and its Syrian hinterland played a part in the complex process that led to the integration of the Levant into the world economy. Foreign trade stimulated the production of cash crops such as silk, cotton, soap, leather, and cereals wherever they could easily be transported to the coast. After 1860 Beirut flourished as an exporting center. Palestinian output and exports of cereals, fruits, olives, soap, textiles, and leather also grew with increased political control over bedouins, and because new lands were brought into cultivation. In Jabal Nablus merchant and money-lending elites and rich peasants broke the hold of old sub-district rural chiefs and their clienteles on the society. The middle peasantry increased its holdings, and eventually moved to the towns. Soap production from olive oil became the premier industry, and gave the town dominance over the surrounding countryside. The shift from textiles to olive oil

linked Nablus, via Beirut, to the world economy. In Lebanon, rising population and greater economic specialization allowed silk weavers to enhance their position. Other products, such as Syrian cloths woven with silver and gold threads, which could not be imitated in Europe, maintained their hold on a specialized market. However, many craftsmen succumbed to European competition. Christian merchants active in the import-export trade became the protégés of Europeans and gained an advantage over Muslims.

These foreign commercial, educational, and religious influences, rather than internal political and economic reforms, led to the formation of a new literary intelligentsia. What the Tanzimat had done in Turkey, and what economic change did in Egypt, Western education did in Lebanon. A small vanguard took the lead in formulating a cultural renaissance. Educated Arabs became aware, not only of the West, but of their own literary heritage. The early figures in the literary revival, such as Nasif Yaziji and Butrus Bustani, were Christian-Arab writers. Bustani was a Maronite, educated at the seminary of Ayn Warqa, who compiled a dictionary to revive interest in the Arabic language. These early publicists disseminated their views through cultural and national associations, such as the Society of Arts and Sciences founded in 1847 and the Syrian Scientific Society founded in 1857, to foster the study of Arabic literature and the recollection of the glory of the Arab past. The early Arab literary thinkers also stressed modernization and reform. Their newspapers and journals presented Western European scientific and political ideas. Government, they preached, should be conducted in the interest of the governed, and provide for just and regular taxation, education, and legal reform.

By the turn of the century the intellectual revival had turned into political unrest, based upon strong anti-Turkish feeling and a strong sense of the superiority of Arab to Turkish peoples. Al-Kawakibi (1849–1903) was one of the first Arab writers to say that Arabs must take the leadership of the Muslim world from the corrupted Turks. The new literary attitude may have been promoted by a conspiracy for the restoration of the Caliphate in the person of the Sharif of Mecca, the custodian of the holy places. Behind this revival of Arab sensibility lay Islamic religious feelings channeled into pro-Arab sentiments. Arabs, after all, were the first people of Islam. The Quran was revealed in Arabic, and the glorious days of the early Islamic empires were Arab glories. Finally, Christian-Arab writers put forward the idea of secession from the Ottoman empire. Negib Azoury called for the formation of a secular Arab state in which Christians and Muslims would be equal citizens under a constitutional regime.

For very different reasons, and at a later date, Arab nationalism also took root among the Muslim notables of Damascus. Here the primary factors were not political autonomy and commercial penetration, but the very operation of the Ottoman system and a Muslim reaction against growing European – and local Christian – commercial success. Before 1860 the Damascus notables were primarily ‘ulama’ descended from prominent eighteenth-century families who supplied the officials

for the religious posts of mufii, *khatib* (preacher), and Syndic of the Descendants of the Prophet. They also managed the waqfs, and had strong support from merchants, artisans, janissaries, and the town quarters. In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries these families were joined by military chieftains (*aghawat*), whose power was based on janissary clientèles, and on control of suburban quarters and the grain trade that went through them. By the late nineteenth century 'ulama' and aghawat families had merged into a combined religious and landowning elite. Rich merchants and Ottoman office-holders were also part of this elite. By this time many families were sending their sons to Ottoman professional schools and were competing for places in the Ottoman government service. The notables, however, were not a unified body, but were divided into competing families and factions.

The position of the notables was challenged but not overturned by state programs of centralization, or Tanzimat. The Egyptian occupation of Syria (1831–39) attempted to overcome local independence, establish a centralized government, and promote economic development. Ibrahim Pasha, the son of Muhammad 'Ali, attempted to disarm the local population, and introduced conscription, corvée, and a new head tax. He established monopolies for the production of silk, cotton, and tobacco, and began mining for coal. When Syria was returned to Ottoman suzerainty in 1841, the Ottomans tried to centralize power, eliminate the intermediary notables, and mobilize mass support for the state. They planned to secularize the judicial system and introduce formal equality among Muslims and non-Muslims. Yet, to offset the power of governors, they created local councils (*majlis*) and gave the notables important fiscal and administrative powers. Already threatened by European commercial competition, the growing role of Christians and Jews as intermediaries in trade with Europe, and the beginning of Christian and Jewish money lending in rural areas, the Damascus notables were hostile to Ottoman reforms.

The rise of the Ottoman Committee for Union and Progress in 1908 pushed some of the Damascus notables into adopting the Arabist intellectual and political currents of the day. The new Ottoman government first inspired great hopes, but CUP efforts to centralize power in the hands of Turks disappointed Arab leaders. In Damascus the imposition of Turkish as the language of schools and courts, Turkish controls over waqfs, and the dismissal of local officials blocked the careers and cultural self-expression of educated Arab officials, and led to the adoption of Arabism as the expression of opposition to secularization and Turkish rule. Just before and during World War I Arabism became the ideology of Damascus notables, military officers, lawyers, and those 'ulama' who were out of government favor. Arabism before 1918, however, did not mean political independence. Arab leaders generally favored an Arab–Turkish ruling condominium on the model of the Austro-Hungarian empire, and other schemes for decentralization and Arab equality.

A third current in the formation of Arabism came from Arabia. In 1915, Husayn, the Sharif of Mecca, entered secret negotiations with the British to promote an Arab revolt against Ottoman rule in Syria and Arabia. Husayn hoped, with British help, to

overthrow the Ottomans and become king of an Arab state. His ambition was based upon his religious prestige as Sharif, or descendant of the Prophet, and custodian of the holy places, and upon some earlier conspiracies to make him the new Caliph of the Islamic world. Husayn carefully tried to rally Arab national and literary sentiment to his side by cultivating al-Fatat, a secret society in Damascus, which had approached him to sound out his interest in an independent Arab state allied with Britain. Britain in turn saw that Husayn could be helpful militarily and politically. Thus in a famous letter of October 1915, Sir Henry McMahon, the British High Commissioner in Egypt, implied that the British would recognize an independent Arab state, except for Lebanon and unspecified French interests. In June 1916, Husayn was declared King and attempted to seize the Hijaz. He waged guerrilla warfare against the Turks with the help of British agents and military advisors, including T. E. Lawrence. His forces took 'Aqaba in July 1917. Together the British and the Arabs took Damascus. By the end of the war, the British were in control of most of the Near East, while Faysal, the son of Husayn, established himself as governor of Damascus under British auspices. Faysal, supported by Syrian notables, demanded that the British recognize him as the monarch of an independent Arab state.

The Arab attempt to establish an independent state was aborted by the European powers. The British were not really committed to Husayn. By the Sykes–Picot agreement with France (1916), they had promised to partition the Arab Near East into two zones of direct colonial rule and two spheres of influence, and in 1917, by the Balfour Declaration, they promised to establish a Jewish national home in Palestine. In response to Husayn's protests, Great Britain assured him that the political as well as the civil and religious rights of Arabs would be protected, and in other declarations promised to assist in the formation of independent states based on the consent of the governed. At the conference of San Remo in April 1920, Britain and France nonetheless divided the Arab world in accord with the Sykes–Picot agreement. The allies created four dependent states – Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine. France took control of Lebanon and Syria and ousted Faysal from Damascus; Britain took control of Iraq and Palestine. In 1922 Palestine was divided to create a fifth state – Transjordan. The new colonies were legitimized as mandates of the League of Nations. The turmoil surrounding the creation of these states – petitions, demonstrations, festivals, party activities, and the formation of committees of national defense – mobilized merchants, 'ulama', and street gangs whose involvement in politics was the basis of later concepts of nationalism.

Thus, as opposed to Turkey and Egypt, the British and the French, rather than local elites, held complete sway over the formation of the Arab fertile crescent states. Arab resistance was scarcely conceivable. The Arab national movement was too weak and divided to affect the fortunes of the region. Its literary wing was barely coming to political consciousness; the Arab revolt led by Sharif Husayn did not represent the modernist aspirations of the intellectuals in Lebanon and Syria. The Damascus notables were divided by faction, party, and competition for power.

While Arab ethnic and linguistic pride – and claims for autonomy or an equal place in the Ottoman empire – had been expressed, no Arab leader had a clear image of the political future. Rather, there were competing tendencies toward decentralization, toward a single Arab state, and toward regional states. In a society that had virtually no history of independent states and no history of internal institutional or economic reform, a national political movement could not but be immature. Thus the British and the French created the Arab states, gave them territorial boundaries and central regimes, and bequeathed to the future the dilemma of a cultural region partitioned into numerous small states.

ARABISM IN THE COLONIAL PERIOD

From the 1920s to the 1950s each of these states (apart from Palestine, which had special problems, to be considered shortly) was caught up in a double political struggle. Each attempted to win independence from its French or British colonial overlord, and within each there was a growing struggle for power between a dominant older-generation conservative elite and rising younger elites. Out of these struggles came political independence in the late 1940s and a conjoined domestic and international crisis over political leadership and ideological identity in the 1950s.

In the mandate period each country was in the control of a foreign power allied to a conservative domestic political elite. In Iraq, a monarch, Ottoman and Sharifian officers in the service of Faysal, and landowners and tribal chiefs composed the political elite. In Syria it included landowners, merchants, and religious leaders. In Transjordan the palace household of the Amir and the local bedouin chiefs governed the country. Lebanon was governed by the traditional landowning and sectarian bosses. The Arab population of Palestine had its clan and religious spokesmen.

In each country the political elites accepted the mandate system. Their proximate goal was the consolidation of central governments, despite the inherent fragmentation of the population into numerous tribal, ethnic, or sectarian communities; their long-term goal was independence from Britain and France. To institutionalize the newly created states, they tried to turn Arab nationalism into state-centered – Syrian, Iraqi, Lebanese – nationalism, an ideology that would define and legitimize existing states, help integrate non-Muslim minorities into the political systems, express the state structures in terms of a modern form of political identity, and justify their claim to independence from the colonial powers.

While the ruling elites appropriated the term "Arab nationalism," Arab intellectuals and educators kept alive the idea of a unified Arab nation. They defined this nation in terms of a shared language, history, and culture that could overcome the division of Arab peoples into tribes, regions, religions, and states. Sati al-Husri (1880–1968), an Iraqi Arab nationalist and educator, preached the need for unity and willingness to sacrifice parochial interests to the cause of the nation as a whole. Michel Aflaq, the founder of the Ba'th Party, gave the most romantic expression to this idea.

He defined nationalism by the Arab word *qawmiya*, which means "belonging to a group," and implies a total absorption of the individual in the nation. Only through the nation can the individual achieve true freedom and a higher mode of existence. Through solidarity and love of the nation, Arab peoples would not only realize their political objectives but attain the highest spiritual fulfillment:

The nationalism for which we call is love before everything else. It is the very same feeling that binds the individual to his family, because the fatherland is only a large household, and the nation a large family. Nationalism, like every kind of love, fills the heart with joy and spreads hope in the soul; he who feels it would wish to share with all the people this joy which raises him above narrow egotism, draws him nearer to goodness and perfection ... It is, then, the best way to a true humanity.¹

This appeal to romantic unity was akin to a religious mood, and pan-Arab rhetoric was suffused with words such as *umma* (the brotherhood of Muslims) and *milla* (religious community, used to mean nation). Even the mystical concept of *fana'*, loss of self and union with the divine being, was borrowed to express the bond of the individual to the nation. Pan-Arabism was a call to overcome pluralism and worldly interests. It was a secular version of Islam. In the minds of many people, Arab nationalism and Islam could not be differentiated.

This kind of Arab nationalism appealed most profoundly to the younger generation intelligentsia of military officers, administrators, technocrats, and intellectuals. To administer the new countries, the dominant landlord, merchant, tribal, and religious elites needed people to staff the army, the administration, the schools, and the governments' technical services, and thus opened up a channel for youngsters of middle and lower middle class, often of minority backgrounds, to receive an education and a prominent place in the new nations. In Syria, 'Alawis, Druzes, Isma'ilis, and Christians went to high schools and military colleges. In Baghdad, Sunni Arabs followed this route. As in the case of the Ottoman empire and Egypt in the nineteenth century, the reorganization and centralization of state authority, the provision of modern education, and a small degree of economic and social change led to mobility from villages to cities and from rural to urban occupations. As in the nineteenth-century Ottoman empire, control of the apparatus of violence, educational achievement, technical sophistication, political awareness, social grievances against the ruling elites, and strong ambitions for personal and national glory gave the military a dominant position. This new generation also adopted the national ideology because nationalism gave identity to people uprooted from local communities and legitimized the struggle against foreign rule in terms recognized as valid by the colonial powers themselves. The new elites were determined to seize control of the state in the name of domestic reform, anti-colonialism, and Arab nationalism.

¹ Quoted in S. Haim, ed., *Arab Nationalism: An Anthology*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976, p. 242.

Syria in the colonial period

Syria is a principal example of the generational and ideological conflict within the Arab societies. In Syria the French secured public order, built roads and communications networks, and established the administrative infrastructure of a modern state. The French accelerated the sedentarization of the bedouins, which had begun in the late nineteenth century under the Ottomans, expanded cultivated territories at the expense of pastoralism, and converted bedouins into peasants and chiefs into landlords. After World War I the bedouins were further hemmed in by states, settlers, and roads and by heavy investment by city merchants and tribal shaykhs in land reclamation and cultivation.

In order to maintain effective administration, and to inhibit the development of a movement for independence, the French also divided Syria into ethnic and religious districts. Lebanon was made into a separate state. Latakia, which was predominantly populated by poverty-stricken 'Alawi peasants dominated by Sunni landlords, was made into a separate administrative district. The Druze areas of southern Syria, and the Jazira, the plains of northern Syria and the Euphrates region, were given regional autonomy. Alexandretta received special status because of its substantial Turkish minority, and was annexed by Turkey in 1939. Thus, France established the framework of a modern Syrian state but then reinforced ethnic and religious divisions to inhibit the formation of a cohesive national society.

Starting in the 1930s and continuing into the period of independence, the conservative elites were opposed by young army officers of middle-class backgrounds, educated in the military academy of Homs, and by Western-educated intellectuals and politicians. The most important expression of the younger generation was the Ba'ith Party. The Ba'ith was founded in the 1940s by Michel Aflaq and Salah al-Din Bitar, two Syrian schoolteachers educated in Paris in the 1930s. They developed a doctrine of Arab unity, social justice, democracy, and freedom. They were anti-colonialists in international orientation and socialists in domestic programs. They espoused not only a political doctrine but also a mystical feeling for the rejuvenation of the unified Arab nation. In 1949 they were joined by Akram al-Hawrani, a socialist agitator and organizer of revolts in Homs, and a conspirator with close contacts in the army.

The weakening of France in World War II opened the way to Syrian independence in 1947, and the new regime was immediately beset by a series of military coups which progressively transferred power from the old generation to the new. The process of forming a new political regime, however, was not to be completed without a protracted domestic and international crisis in the mid-1950s and early 1960s.

Iraq to 1958

Iraq was carved out of the Ottoman empire, and had a similar generational and national history. During the Ottoman period pastoralism had displaced sedentary agriculture, especially in the upper Euphrates region, the Diyala region, and in

Map 31 The Middle East between the world wars



southern Iraq. In the nineteenth century the Ottoman state started the process of reducing the power of tribal chiefs. The land code of 1858 created a system that assured persons in possession of title deeds ownership of the land. These title deeds were acquired by city-dwelling merchants, tax-farmers, and some tribal leaders, who thus wrested control of the land from the tribesmen.

When the British conquered Iraq in 1917, they ruled it as a colony on the Indian model. In 1920, a revolt of Ottoman officials and landlords, Sunni and Shi'i religious leaders, and tribal groups forced them to include the Iraqi elites. The British set up a constitutional monarchy under Sharif Husayn's son Faysal, to whom they felt obligated because of his help in the war. An Anglo-Iraqi treaty of 1922 gave the British control of military, financial, judicial, and foreign affairs. In 1930, a new treaty made Iraq legally independent but allowed Britain continued control over foreign and military affairs.

British administrators helped create the infrastructure of a modern state. The British consolidated the late Ottoman land system by using rural and tribal shaykhs to take charge of tax collection and labor organization. Under the monarchy, Iraq was run by a small coalition of rural landowners, tribal chiefs, 'ulama', Shi'i religious leaders, and army officers – the latter including Ottoman officers educated in Istanbul, Sharifian officers in the service of Faysal before his arrival in Iraq, and Iraqis educated in the Baghdad Military Academy. This elite, however, was deeply divided. Between 1936 and 1941 there were a number of military coups, and World War II brought bitter struggles between pro-British and pro-German factions. In 1941 Rashid 'Ali al-Gaylani took control of the government in the interest of a pro-German policy, but British troops seized the country. From then until 1958 the King governed, often with the collaboration of his principal minister, Nuri al-Sa'id, and a small minority of landowners, 2 percent of whom owned 66 percent of the land. In the name of Arab nationalism, this elite, predominantly of Sunni background, governed a populace that was then about half Shi'i and one-fourth Kurdish.

Here too, the dominance of the old elite was challenged by a new generation of soldiers, intellectuals, and workers thrown up by a changed economy. The appropriation of land by the shaykhs and the breakup of tribal communities drove large numbers of people to the cities. A new urban generation of lower-ranking officials, junior army officers, textile workers, and displaced peasants hostile to the entrenched regime took form. The army became the effective center of the opposition. Until 1958, the regime contained this growing opposition by proposals for extensive development programs, but it did not survive to carry them out. An army coup brought an end to the monarchy in 1958.

Transjordan and Jordan

Transjordan was, even more than Iraq, a British creation. It was the most "unnatural" of the new states, corresponding to no historical province or local community. Originally it was thought to be implied in the Balfour Declaration's promise of

Palestine as a Jewish homeland, but in 1922 the British allowed Amir 'Abdallah, a brother of Faysal, to establish a government. They built up the Arab Legion and provided subsidies. Thus, the British honored their commitment to the Hashimite family and also reduced their commitment to the Zionists. A 1928 treaty established a constitutional monarchy, a legislature, and political parties, but reserved for Britain control over foreign policy and the army. In 1946 Transjordan became independent, though a treaty of 1948 reserved for Britain the right to maintain bases there. Between 1948 and 1950, as a result of the Arab-Israeli war, Transjordan absorbed parts of Palestine and was reorganized as the Kingdom of Jordan. By 1950, the state of Jordan comprised two totally different populations: the bedouins and farmers on the eastern bank of the Jordan; and, on the western side, the Palestinian population, including refugees and inhabitants of the West Bank. In order to establish an effective state, the constitution of 1952 gave representation to both elements in a new parliament. A National Guard was formed, comprising Palestinian villagers, and was later integrated into the Arab Legion.

Throughout this period Jordan was governed by a king, an elite of British army officers, Palestinian-Arab officials, Circassian palace servants, and Muslim religious leaders. In Jordan, as opposed to Iraq, the influence of tribal chiefs was rapidly reduced. While the traditional society of Transjordan was based on kinship and tribal groups, the development of the central state reduced the functions of the tribal chiefs and deprived them of their clienteles and military power. A new middle class of government officials, clerks, teachers, and merchants helped to break down their influence. By 1950, they had ceased to be a threat to the authority of the state and the army. However, in Jordan, as elsewhere, the educated middle class became a source of opposition to the governing elite. The army remained loyal to the state; the opposition was built on the intelligentsia and the Palestinians. While military-socialist regimes came to power in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, in Jordan the opposition was defeated in 1958 with the help of British paratroopers. The regime was consolidated by the defeat of a Palestinian uprising in September 1970. King Husayn, who ruled from 1952 until his death in 1999, was succeeded by his son 'Abdallah. The regime is still based on military and bureaucratic elites, wealthy merchants, and East Bank tribal leaders, and the opposition comes from the Muslim Brothers, who are loyal to the King, but consider the liberation of all of Palestine a religious duty and reject all peace initiatives, and from more radical Islamist groups, often Palestinian. Jordan survives on American economic aid, and the balance of power among its Arab neighbors.

Lebanon

In Lebanon the struggle was not so much between generations or among military, landowning, and intellectual elites as among local political bosses and religious communities. On the eve of national state formation, Lebanon was governed by the *zu'ama'*, or bosses, usually local landowners and religious leaders, whose powers

were based on the control of the peasants and on patron-client networks. The modern state of Lebanon, like Syria, was a French creation. Though France had a long history of close relations with the Maronite population, the French did not create a purely Christian state. To the old province of Lebanon, new districts, including Tripoli, Sidon, the Biqā', and South Lebanon, were added to increase the total size of the country and the proportion of Muslims. Lebanon was initially governed by a French High Commissioner, but in 1926 a new constitution divided political power among the major religious communities. It provided for a president, a ministerial government, and a bicameral legislature, in which seats were distributed in a ratio of 6:5 for Christians and Muslims. By agreement, the President would always be a Maronite, the Prime Minister a Sunni, and the head of parliament a Shi'a. Foreign affairs would be in the hands of a Christian minister; the army would be headed by a Maronite, with Muslim or Druze subalterns. The division of power was based upon dubious census data. Furthermore, the state institutions were designed to reinforce sectarian divisions rather than integrate Lebanese society. Government agencies did not build national services, but rather subsidized sectarian schools, courts, and charities. Political parties in Lebanon were expressions of the *zu'ama'*, and popular loyalties were channeled to the leaders of *clienteles* rather than to the state as such.

From 1920 to 1945 Lebanon was governed on the basis of compromise among sectarian and communal bosses. In the mandate period the bosses were linked up in two main political parties: the National Bloc was substantially Maronite Christian and favored independence, but resisted ties with other Arab nationalists; the Constitutional Bloc favored close relations with Syria. In 1943 the Lebanese factions agreed on a National Pact in which the Christians and Muslims deemphasized outside political ties, whether French or Arab, for the sake of greater internal cooperation. Thus the way was prepared for the formation of an independent regime in 1945. The postwar regime continued to be based upon the allocation of government powers and resources among the bosses and confessional groups. The state existed to maintain the balance of power among them, and from 1947 to 1958 the country was ruled by a succession of coalition governments.

THE STRUGGLE FOR ARAB UNITY AND THE CONTEMPORARY FERTILE CRESCENT STATES

By the end of World War II the Arab fertile crescent states had each become an independent nation, though their future ideological and political character was yet to be determined. In each country domestic elites were still engaged in a struggle for power, but in the late 1940s and 1950s these struggles would be vastly complicated by Arab-world and global conflicts. The Arab-Israeli war of 1947-48, the establishment of the state of Israel, the struggle for supremacy among Egypt and other Arab states, the drive for Arab unity, the advent of the cold war, and the maneuvering of the great powers all interacted with domestic issues to define the identity of the contemporary Arab states.

Apart from the struggles of older- and younger-generation elites, the most important factor in the postwar period was the drive toward Arab unity. While the movement for Arab unity had its origins in the pre-World War I Arab nationalist movement and in the brief and abortive effort of Faysal to establish an Arab kingdom in Damascus, with the formation of the Arab state system after World War I the concept of a single Arab nation and state survived only in the keeping of intellectuals and ideologues. It was revived in the late 1930s by the outbreak of the Arab revolt in Palestine. Between 1936 and 1939 Palestinian peasants carried on a double struggle against Jewish colonization and British rule which mobilized widespread support in Egypt and the fertile crescent countries. Also, on the eve of World War II, Britain renewed its efforts to win Arab support by declaring itself in favor of a union of Arab countries. Egypt took up pan-Arabism as a vehicle for the assertion of Egyptian leadership in the Arab-speaking Middle East. In 1945 the League of Arab States was founded under Egyptian patronage, with an Egyptian secretary-general and headquarters in Cairo. However, the Hashimite rulers of Iraq and Transjordan had their own schemes for Arab unification, and resisted Egyptian hegemony. For all practical purposes the League foundered over its failure to prevent the formation of the state of Israel in 1948.

The cause of Arab unity, however, was revived in the 1950s. By then it had been taken up by Nasser in Egypt, by the Ba'th Party in Syria, and by other elements of the new postwar Arab intelligentsia, as the banner of united opposition to Israel, to colonial and post-colonial domination by foreign powers, and to conservative domestic elites who stood in the way of social reform and economic development. Inspired by Nasser's charismatic leadership, the struggle for power in each of the fertile crescent countries was now waged in the name of Arab unity. In Egypt Nasser and the Free Officers came to power in 1952 and launched their socialist policies in the late 1950s. In Syria the Ba'th Party took power in the late 1950s and 1960s. In Iraq a coup d'état overthrew the monarchy and brought a military regime to power in 1958. In Lebanon and Jordan, however, American and British intervention helped defeat the opposition and kept the established regimes intact.

The domestic struggles were entangled in big-power rivalries. At the end of World War II Britain and France were no longer able to maintain their Middle Eastern positions, and had to concede the independence of the fertile crescent states. The United States and the Soviet Union emerged as the principal competitors for regional influence, and in the 1950s the United States attempted to align Britain, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and the Arab countries in an American-sponsored treaty organization. The United States was supported by Nuri al-Sa'id, the Prime Minister of Iraq, who proposed bringing the other Arab states into line. In January 1955 he and Adnan Menderes of Turkey proclaimed the Baghdad Pact. Egypt and Syria, however, opposed the Iraqi initiative, and did not want to accept American aid. After the Israeli attack on the Sinai in February 1955, Nasser emerged as the leader of the Arab struggle against imperialism and Zionism. All the Arab countries were swept by a wave of sentiment in favor of Arab unity.

The crisis of the 1950s gave the new regimes in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq their political and ideological identity. In each country the new dominant force was a military elite legitimized by its formal commitments to Arab national independence, and state-guided modernization of the economy. The political consciousness of these elites, formed in the 1950s and 1960s, was anti-imperialist, anti-Israel, and neutralist in international politics. They adopted socialist regimes which were in accord with the rejection of Western imperialism, with the support given to underdeveloped countries by the Soviet Union and its allies, and with the need to reject the previous generation that had failed to make national economic and social progress. Nevertheless, the crisis did not lead to Arab unity. Despite their common interest, the rivalries among Egypt, Syria, and Iraq prevented Arab unification.

This phase of Arab nationalism ended with the defeat of the Arab states in the June 1967 war with Israel. Nasser's leadership was discredited. The Arab states were condemned as ineffectual, and the idea of Arab unity lost its political appeal. Egypt abandoned the Palestinian cause, made peace with Israel, and allied itself with the United States and with the conservative Arabian states. The Ba'th Party in Syria and Iraq gave up the goal of Arab unity in favor of power in each separate country. In the 1970s Arabism came to be associated with oil and the economic wealth of the Gulf states and Sa'udi Arabia. A period of disillusionment with nationalism, national states, socialism, and secularism set in, and a new climate of opinion favored the reassertion of Muslim values and identities.

Syria

In many respects the new regimes in Syria and Iraq resembled that of Egypt. They were strongly authoritarian military regimes with organized bureaucratic and one-party political support, and they also depended upon patronage relationships between the leaders and a favored clientele. They subscribed to populist Arab nationalist ideologies. At the outset both adopted socialist or state-centered policies of economic development. Development not controlled, sponsored, or manipulated by the state was inhibited. In neither state were independent political parties, labor unions, or student groups allowed. In both, religiously based opposition was crushed. The Syrian and Iraqi states are different from Egypt in that neither is based upon a pre-existing national society. Syria is about two-thirds Sunni Muslim, but there are strong 'Alawi, Druze, Isma'ili, and Christian minorities. Iraq is divided among a Shi'i majority (some 60 percent) and two large minorities, one Kurdish (about 20 percent) and one Sunni Arab (about 20 percent). While the Egyptian government has a broad popular base, the governments of Syria and Iraq are drawn from minority groups, and even from a limited number of families and clients within these minorities.

Since the upheavals of the 1950s, the fortunes of Syria have been shaped by the Ba'th Party and military regime. In the mid-1950s the Ba'th promoted union with Egypt to form the United Arab Republic (1958-61), a disastrous move which

destroyed the civilian leadership of the party and allowed the army to take power in 1963. Since then, despite changes of personnel, Syria has been governed by a regime of army officers, and from 1966 to 2000 by only one man, Hafiz al-Asad.

To create the new regime the Ba'th Party pursued a socialist program. Agrarian reform began in 1958 with the dismantling of large estates and the limitation of ownership to a maximum of 50 hectares of irrigated and 300 hectares of unirrigated land. In 1961, lands were expropriated and redistributed to peasants. In 1966, the socialization of agriculture began in earnest, with the formation of agricultural collectives, a state monopoly of cotton production, and the beginning of the Tebke dam project which is expected to bring 640,000 hectares of reclaimed land in the Euphrates basin into cultivation. To break the patron-client ties of peasants to landlords and urban-based money lenders, new cooperatives and a peasants' union were established, which gave the state direct control of the population. The revolution, however, was not complete, for a substantial portion of the land remained in the control of rich peasants, landlords, and urban investors. These measures were followed by the nationalization of industry and commerce in 1965. Electricity, oil distribution, cotton ginning, and most foreign trade were taken under government control. Finally, in its program to defeat competing elites, the Ba'thi state took control of waqfs and appointments to religious offices.

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when the French promoted the minorities as a mechanism for controlling the majority Muslim population. Finally, 'Alawis came to power in the 1960s and 1970s under the aegis of Hafiz al-Asad.

The Syrian economy was flexibly managed to reinforce the regime. In the late 1960s and early 1970s the public sector failed to generate the resources needed to finance the state, but deficit spending financed by foreign loans and a liberalization of the economy led to a trade boom in the 1970s. By the late 1980s economic expansion led to a payments deficit, serious inflation, and a partial collapse. This politicized and fitful management of the economy favored party members and government workers, and many peasants regardless of confessional affiliation, and served to coopt 'Alawi, Aleppin, and Damascene merchants, but economic development was in the main subordinated to political objectives. Domestic investment was limited, and self-sustaining economic growth has not been achieved.

In this centralized, secular, and socialist Arab state dominated by an 'Alawi minority and its powerful military and intelligence apparatus, the majority of the population is Sunni Muslim. Islam is not mentioned in the constitutions of 1950 or 1973, and President Asad refused to officially declare Islam the religion of the state. However, it is acknowledged that the head of state must be a Muslim, and the Shari'a is embodied in the 1953 Syrian law of personal status. Religiously defined Sunni opposition has surfaced in the form of the Society of Muslim Brothers, founded in Aleppo and Damascus in the 1930s. As in Egypt, the Muslim Brothers appeal to the "old bazaar" shopkeepers, artisans, craftsmen, and their modern-educated student and intelligentsia offspring. Operating as a political party in the Syrian elections of 1961, the Muslim Brothers won 5.8 percent of the national vote and 17.6 percent of the Damascus vote. In the 1960s and 1970s, however, the Muslim Brothers turned from electoral politics to civil disobedience and armed resistance. From mid-1979 to late 1981, in response to the Syrian government's intervention against the Palestinians in Lebanon, rising inflation, and the general decline of Sunni political influence, they launched guerrilla attacks and then large-scale uprisings in Aleppo and Hama. In Hama the trigger for the resistance was the establishment of new industries in competition with local merchants, and the settlement of 'Alawi peasants in a Sunni region. These revolts were ruthlessly crushed, with widespread destruction of the historical parts of Hama. Since then there has not been notable resistance to the regime from either Sunnis or the Muslim Brothers. Thus the Islamic movement in Syria was essentially an urban reaction against a rural-based regime, an expression of Sunni hostility to 'Alawis, and a rebellion of the governed against the governing elite. It was supported by merchants and artisans, 'ulama', landowners, and other notables dispossessed by the Ba'th.

Since the advent of Hafiz al-Asad, Syria's foreign policy has turned upon complicated considerations. From 1955 until 1989 the mainstay of Syrian policy was its alliance with the Soviet Union and its consistent hostility to Israel. Syria took the line that the Arab states must mobilize to defeat and dismantle the state of Israel,

and expel the European population. The only way to do this, Asad recognized, was for the Arab states to come abreast of Israel in economic, military, and organizational capacities. Syria's support for cross-border attacks upon Israel were among the critical precipitating factors in the 1967 war in which Syria lost the Golan Heights. The loss of the Golan remains to the present the central problem in Syrian-Israeli relations. Nonetheless, Syrian policy after 1967 was also carefully calculated to void premature hostilities. Syria has never permitted the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to attack Israel from its territory. Syria intervened in the Lebanese civil war (1975-91), partly to forestall the emergence of a PLO-dominated Lebanon which might drag Syria into a premature war with Israel, and partly to forestall the possibility of a Lebanese-Iraqi alliance against Syria.

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 led to a reorientation of Syrian foreign policy. The withdrawal of Russian military and financial support made it impossible to sustain an energetic anti-Israel policy. The formation of a USA-led coalition of Arab and European states to defeat Iraq in the Gulf War (1991) also made plain the shift to American, Egyptian, and Arabian political hegemony in the region. Hafiz al-Asad adapted himself to these new circumstances by joining the anti-Iraq coalition, pacifying Lebanon, and entering into talks with Israel over the Golan Heights. Syria, however, did not come to an agreement with Israel, and has tried to avoid decisive commitments.

The death of Hafiz al-Asad – and the succession of his son Bashar in 2000 – suggests a more relaxed regime, but in a society that is highly factionalized, where the middle classes are relatively weak, and in a situation fraught with the chronic threat of war, the Syrian political system seems locked into place.

Iraq

In many respects the development of Iraq is parallel to that of Syria. Iraq also has a narrowly based, patrimonial and highly authoritarian regime. In Iraq the old regime was also overthrown in the name of pan-Arab nationalism and domestic reform. In July 1958 a group of young army officers led by 'Abd al-Karim Qassim, representing the generation of soldiers, administrators, intellectuals, and ideologues schooled in the nationalist ideals of the 1930s and 1940s, seized power. Their hatred of Iraq's dependence on Great Britain, the Baghdad Pact, and the 1958 effort to form a conservative alliance between Iraq and Jordan precipitated a coup d'état, the execution of the King, and the formation of a Revolutionary Council.

The new regime at first favored conservative reforms in land ownership, free enterprise in industry, and strong state policies to promote health care and education. Its immediate hopes, however, were disappointed. Under Qassim's leadership, it quickly turned into a military dictatorship based on strong Communist Party support. The Ba'th Party, the Muslim Brothers, and other opposition groups were suppressed. The Qassim regime was in turn overthrown by a Ba'th Party coup in 1963, also launched in the name of Arab unity, which set Iraq on its present course. The

Ba'th nationalized the major banks and industries. In 1968 another military coup brought Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr and Saddam Husayn to power. A new constitution declared Iraq part of the Arab nation, an Islamic state, and a socialist society. The regime established in 1968 under Saddam Husayn rules to the present.

His regime is based upon the Sunni minority, and within that minority on people from the town of Tikrit, within Tikrit upon particular related lineages, and from within these lineages certain families who provide the officers of the government, the Ba'th Party and the Republican Guard. The men closest to Saddam are his handpicked relatives and allies, and they rule the country through the party, security and military apparatus, and by a reign of surveillance and threat. A small cadre of army officers dominates the government and the ambassadorial corps and manages the major industries. Independent lawyers, landowners, and businessmen no longer have a significant part to play in public policy. The new elite comes from middle and lower-middle class, and often conservative Islamic, backgrounds, but it is basically a state elite dependent upon the centralization of military, economic, and educational activities. The elite does not represent the majority Shi'i and substantial Kurdish populations of the country. The Ba'th regime controls all sectors of the society, and has established controls over all aspects of social and economic life. Independent agencies are not tolerated, and government controls are exercised over labor unions, businesses, the civil service, universities, and student and women's groups.

The Ba'th regime also closely controls the economy. Agriculture is regulated by the state. With the establishment of the new military regime in 1958, a program of land reform on the Egyptian model was implemented. Laws were passed to limit ownership of land to 1,000 dunums (250 hectares) of irrigated or 2,000 dunums of unirrigated land and to organize the peasantry into agricultural cooperatives to assure efficient utilization of redistributed lands. This program was successful in expropriating the old landed elite, but only after 1970 were substantial acreages redistributed and peasant cooperatives – later collectives – organized. In the 1970s, however, the main emphasis was shifted to capital-intensive irrigation and the development of mechanized farms financed by the state. The government thus adopted an agricultural policy to bypass the peasant sector. To consolidate its control of agriculture the state resisted tribal ownership of land, peasant unions, and other political forms of rural organization.

Nationalization and government controls have been applied in oil and industrial production. Oil was discovered in Iraq before World War I and was first exploited by the Turkish Petroleum Company, founded in 1912 with German, Dutch, and British participation. In 1929 the company was reorganized as the Iraqi Petroleum Company. In the course of the 1930s new concessions were granted to extend oil exploration, and in 1938 the several companies exploring for oil were merged into a single Iraqi Petroleum Company. In 1952 Iraq obtained an agreement from the international oil companies for a 50–50 share of oil profits. After 1958, the new

military regime took a more radical line. In 1961 Iraq revoked the oil concessions, and in 1972 finally nationalized the Iraqi Petroleum Company. Oil production was maintained with Soviet and French help, but Iraq suffered considerable losses as a result of curtailed production.

Supported by the army and by revenues from oil production fully in its control, the state had little incentive for compromise and negotiation. State power was consolidated by a regime of terror. Informers, armed party members, and secret police were pervasive in the society. Political protesters – and also party, bureaucracy, and army members – could be summarily executed for the smallest deviance, hesitation, or suspicion of disloyalty. Political opposition was virtually eliminated. The regime was especially hostile to the Kurds, to whom it denied regional autonomy, a share in economic development, and permission to teach the Kurdish language in Kurdish schools. At the same time, the Ba'thi state managed to create a wide base of public acceptance. In the 1970s and 1980s it provided extensive subsidies for urban middle-class education and health policies, and it used the wars against Iran in the 1980s and the United States during the Gulf War of 1991 and its aftermath to win further public acquiescence.

The state has also tried to generate an Iraqi national identity. Like Egypt and Syria the new regime went through a phase of pan-Arabism. The Ba'th Party, stressing the solidarity of Arab peoples and the Iraqi state, competed with Egypt for leadership in the Arab world. By 1970 the Iraqi regime began to move toward a state-centered national identity. A new emphasis was placed upon the ancient Mesopotamian heritage of Iraq, now considered a pre-Islamic but proto-Arab civilization. Archeology, folklore, poetry, the arts, and local festivals were promoted to enhance a sense of Iraqi separateness. Islam, while retaining the strong allegiance of the population, played little part in public life until the 1990s when the regime shifted to an Islamic rhetoric for its justifications. Islam has also been the rallying call of the opposition. In the 1960s Shi'i 'ulama' formed the Da'wa al-Islamiya (Islamic Mission) to work for an Islamic state and social justice. The more militant Mujahidin (Muslim Warriors) was founded in 1979. Wherever militant opposition emerged, the regime reduced it to sporadic and ineffective terrorism.

In foreign policy Iraq's goal is to restore Arab unity under Iraqi leadership. The two prongs of this policy were competition with Egypt and Syria for Arab world leadership, and the assertion of Iraqi hegemony in the Persian Gulf. The eastern flank of Iraqi policy has led to almost two decades of warfare between Iraq and Iran, and Iraq and Kuwait and its Arab, American, and European allies.

The Iraqi-Kuwaiti problem began with the ambiguities of late Ottoman rule. The Ottomans were the actual suzerains of Iraq, but only *de jure* suzerains of Kuwait. After 1902 Kuwait was in fact a British protectorate. In 1920 Britain received a League of Nations mandate for both Kuwait and Iraq, and the border between the two was taken to be a line defined by an Ottoman-British treaty of 1913 which had never been ratified. When Kuwait became independent in 1961, Iraq claimed that

it was a part of Iraq, and invaded in 1963. British and Sa'udi troops intervened and forced Iraq to desist, but Iraq maintained its claims to small islands in the upper Persian Gulf which were essential to keep open access to sea lanes for oil export. Another border crisis followed in 1975.

Tension with Iran over border problems was equally high. Iraq and Iran had long disputed control of the Shatt al-Arab, the single waterway that merges the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers on the last leg of their journey to the Gulf. In 1975, in return for promises that the Shah would not support Iraqi Kurdish resistance, Iraq conceded that the whole of the waterway was Iranian territory. Then in 1980, taking advantage of the revolutionary chaos in Iran, Iraq attacked western Iran. Iraq wanted to reverse its losses of 1975 and capture control of the oilfields of Khuzistan, an Arab-speaking province in western Iran. The Iraqis also hoped to forestall the spread of Iranian revolutionary influences to the Shi'a of Iraq, and perhaps to topple the Iranian regime. Iraq may have seen the war as a way of asserting Iraqi supremacy in the Gulf region and in the Arab world generally. The war, however, cost almost eight bitter and bloody years of fighting, in which vast numbers of lives were lost on both sides before a stalemate and a truce was reached in 1989.

With the end of the war against Iran, Iraq returned to its claims that Kuwait was part of Iraq, protested Kuwait's refusal to forgive its war loans to Iraq, objected to Kuwaiti drilling under a disputed and demilitarized border zone, and to excessive Kuwaiti oil production which lowered the price of oil in international markets to the detriment of Iraq's revenues. Iraq invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1991 to loot Kuwaiti resources and to gain a controlling influence in Gulf policy. Iraq's extraordinary military preparations, however, including a worldwide network to acquire materials for biological, chemical, and nuclear warfare, implied a threat to dominate Sa'udi Arabia as well. Saddam Husayn justified his invasion as an attack on a backward feudal and tribal elite. He soon linked his invasion to the Palestinian cause, calling for Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza in return for withdrawal from Kuwait. Later he attacked Israel with ballistic missiles. Saddam's audacity and the sheer display of power had widespread appeal among Palestinians, many Jordanians, and many Arab intellectuals. He was opposed by Egypt, Syria, Sa'udi Arabia, and the Gulf states, and by a United Nations coalition led by the United States.

American intervention was governed by two considerations. The USA was opposed to any regional concentration of power that might affect long-term access to oil on favorable terms for the USA and other industrialized countries in whose economic viability America had an immediate interest. In 1953 it had helped bring down Premier Mosaddeq of Iran; it had opposed Nasser of Egypt in the 1960s and the revolutionary government of Iran in the 1980s, and now it would oppose Saddam Husayn. The USA was also concerned about the possible proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, thus far possessed only by Israel.

On January 16, 1991 the United Nations coalition launched a rapid and decisive attack on Iraqi forces. Yet the military victory was not pursued to the point of over-

throwing Saddam Husayn. At the last moment the coalition forces held back from an attack upon the Republican Guard. Shi'i rebellions in the south and Kurdish rebellions in the north were abandoned by the USA and its allies, and were crushed by Saddam. Most probably the USA and its Arab allies were reluctant to destroy the Iraqi regime lest the country be fragmented. They feared Iranian hegemony over the Shi'i population of southern Iraq, and the potential subversion of Shi'i populations in eastern Arabia and Kuwait. Turkey feared the emergence of an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq.

The cease-fire of April 1991 imposed an economic embargo and required Iraq to cooperate with a United Nations arms-inspection regime, and to destroy all stockpiles of missiles and weapons of mass destruction. Despite defeat Saddam Husayn maintains unchallenged control of the country. By 2001 the arms-control program had failed, and the embargo was being progressively undermined. Though the salaried urban middle class is ruined, and Iraqis suffer from a badly deteriorated standard of living – from shortages of food and medical supplies, and a high rate of infant mortality – the regime maintains its power based on the military, the intelligence services, the Bath Party, and on revived tribal loyalties and a tribalist ideology.

Lebanon

While states were consolidated in Syria, Iraq, and Jordan, Lebanon disintegrated into civil war. The mandate-period constitution of 1926 divided power among the various religious communities – Maronite, Sunni, and Shi'i – but the Lebanese government was never able to centralize power and the country was run by the *zu'ama* – the bosses – through their networks of political parties, religious charities, schools, and courts. In 1943 Christian and Muslim bosses agreed to cooperate in the formation of an independent state, and formed a coalition which lasted until 1958. The regime of the bosses, however, did not allow for the rise of new strata in the society, including technocrats and bureaucrats, upwardly mobile lower-middle-class persons – often coming from rural areas to Beirut – or for Arab nationalists and lower-class urban gangs. Moreover, as Muslims became the demographic majority, they demanded a larger share of political power and economic opportunities. In 1958 Arab nationalist, pro-Nasserist elements tried to seize power, but American intervention helped restore the status quo.

In the 1960s and 1970s Lebanon was divided between those who would allow the Palestinians to use Lebanon as a base for the struggle against Israel and those who wanted to restrict Palestinian activities and avoid a confrontation with Israel. The country was polarized between conservative and leftist coalitions. The conservatives included the Phalange and other Maronite groups, and some Shi'a. The Maronite coalition was headed by Pierre Gemayl, the head of the Phalange, and by Camille Chamoun, a former President of Lebanon. Its goal was either to dominate Lebanon or to partition the country and create a Maronite state. This group favored a free-enterprise economy, and non-involvement in the struggle against Israel. Their

opponents were an ideologically defined leftist coalition including Muslims, Druzes, Palestinians, and some Christian minorities. Prominent in this group was the Progressive Socialist Party, primarily Druze, led by the Jumblatt family, which supported the Palestinians, a program of socialist development within Lebanon, and neutralism in world affairs. This faction also included the Syrian Social Nationalist Party which was largely Greek Orthodox and conservative, but opposed to the separatism of the Maronites. All of these groups were united by their opposition to the status quo, to the predominance of Christians, and to the restriction of Palestinian activities.

In August 1975 the tensions among these forces ignited into civil war. The Lebanese army disintegrated, and the fighting was exacerbated by the involvement of the *zu'ama'* and their forces, and the *qabayan*, or lower-class street gangs. Syria intervened in the summer of 1976 on the side of the Christians when it feared that a Palestinian victory might set the stage for a Lebanese-Iraqi alliance against Syria, or for Syrian involvement in an unwanted war with Israel. With the Syrian intervention Lebanon disintegrated into sectarian enclaves. In June 1982 Israel invaded Lebanon in the hope of driving the PLO from both South Lebanon, where it had been mounting attacks against Israel, and from its headquarters in Beirut, and of shoring up a cooperative Maronite regime. The Israeli invasion succeeded in driving out the PLO, but not in creating the Maronite government it wanted. The Syrians became ever more entrenched as the arbiters of Lebanese politics.

Furthermore, Israeli occupation of South Lebanon stimulated the rise of new political forces. Among the disadvantaged Shi'a of southern Lebanon and Shi'i migrants to Beirut new parties emerged. Tinged with messianic hopes, the rise of the Shi'i underclass was part of the larger Middle East-wide Shi'i upheaval stimulated by the revolution in Iran. Led by Musa al-Sadr, a leading mullah, a new sectarian identity transcending the *zu'ama'* clienteles and defining a Shi'i community apart from Arab nationalism came into being. Musa al-Sadr created an infrastructure of schools and charities, rallied the newly educated and the newly rich alongside laborers, farmers, and teachers, and organized a paramilitary movement called Amal. When he disappeared during a visit to Libya in August 1978, Nabih Berri gave Amal a more secular political orientation to promote the interests of Shi'is within the framework of a Lebanese state.

In response, a rival Shi'i movement, called Hizballah (Party of God), was created by Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, backed by Iran. Its goal was to establish an Islamic republic. This movement took the lead in the struggle against Israel. In the 1990s Hizballah became a major political party, buoyed by its successes in harassing Israeli forces and by the Israeli withdrawal in 2000 from Lebanon, and by its popular social services and infrastructure of schools and clinics. Hizballah participates in Lebanese elections and holds parliamentary seats. Despite its increasing pragmatism, in 2001 Hizballah reaffirmed its commitment to a continuing struggle with Israel as long as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains unresolved.

Lebanon remained mired in a chaotic and violent civil war as long as Maronite and Muslim leaders were unable to agree on a new distribution of power. Finally,

in 1989 the Arab League was able to call a conference of national reconciliation in Sa'udi Arabia, rebalance the distribution of power among Christians and Muslims, and create a government of national unity. In one last spasm of ferocious warfare, General Michel Aoun tried to defeat the other major factions and create a Maronite state, but in 1991 the Syrians crushed Maronite resistance, quelled the fighting, and allowed for the emergence of the first central Lebanese government in fifteen years. Largely under the leadership of Ilyas Hrawi, and under Syrian overlordship, Beirut and Lebanon are being rebuilt.

The crisis of the 1950s gave the new regimes in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq their political and ideological identity. In each country the new dominant force was a military elite legitimized by its formal commitments to Arab national independence, and state-guided modernization of the economy. The political consciousness of these elites, formed in the 1950s and 1960s, was anti-imperialist, anti-Israel, and neutralist in international politics. They adopted socialist regimes which were in accord with the rejection of Western imperialism, with the support given to underdeveloped countries by the Soviet Union and its allies, and with the need to reject the previous generation that had failed to make national economic and social progress. Nevertheless, the crisis did not lead to Arab unity. Despite their common interest, the rivalries among Egypt, Syria, and Iraq prevented Arab unification.

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