

The London School of Economics and Political Science

**A Constructivist Analysis of Religion's Role in
Foreign Policy:**

*The cases of Israel, Iran and Saudi Arabia under the leaderships of Menachem Begin,
Ayatollah Khomeini and Fahd bin Abdulaziz*

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A thesis submitted to the Department of International Relations of the London School of Economics
and Political Science for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

The 1648 landmark signing of the Westphalian Treaties which famously implemented the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio* has, for International Relations (IR), meant that relatively little attention has been paid to religion as an influential force in international relations. A “turn to religion” amongst a growing body of IR scholars, fueled by post-Cold War studies and empirical events, has sought to change this by placing religion within the study of IR. With a view of adding to this debate, this thesis examines the role of religion in Israeli, Iranian and Saudi Arabian foreign policy during the respective leaderships of Menachem Begin (1977-84), Ayatollah Khomeini (1979-89) and Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (1975-1995). It does so by drawing on extensive primary material, including private and public discourse of the leaders in question, as well as existing literature from, primarily, Middle East Studies and Religious Studies. The thesis argues, and shows with reference to its empirical findings, that the leaders’ religious beliefs shaped their respective world-views and, by extension, their foreign policy doctrines and foreign policy outcomes. Moreover, it shows that religion played an important role in legitimizing the leaders themselves as well as their respective foreign policies. In this context, the thesis furthermore shows that, for the foreign policy leaders, religion assumed distinct meanings which were seemingly shaped according to the context in which they operated. Importantly, the thesis argues, this does not uncritically support the long-standing assumption in IR scholarship that religion is epiphenomenal, and/or a tool of instrumentalisation. With reference to Constructivist literature and a dynamic definition of religion developed for this project, the thesis rather explains that the malleable nature of religion can and does interact with variables like material security to shape, and sometimes drive, conceptualisations of national interest and foreign policy outcomes. The project concludes that religion’s role is multi-faceted, and, more to it, that the foreign policies of Khomeini’s Iran, Begin’s Israel and Fahd’s Saudi Arabia cannot be fully understood without it.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“God has proven to be alive and well beyond all question”

- Karen Armstrong on 9/11, 2001 attacks.¹

1.0 Introduction and rationale

Armstrong’s opening quote echoes what in many of the social sciences has long been a topic of debate, but in International Relations (IR) only emerged as such in the post-9/11, 2001 era. Although IR scholars have discussed religion within the broader context of Constructivism since the early 1990s, they have done so indirectly, subsuming religion under broader categories like “culture” or “identity”, most famously, perhaps, in the context Huntington’s *Clash of Civilizations* (1993) thesis, which, as Fox (2007) observes, “buried the religious aspect of [its] argument in the term civilization, probably because of International Relations theory’s tendency to avoid directly addressing the issue of religion.”² Toward the turn of the century, religion started to feature more explicitly on IR’s research agenda thanks, in no small part, to efforts by then Doctoral students Fabio Petito and Pavlos Hatzopoulos of the London School of Economics and Political Science; their conference entitled *Religion and International Relations* has since been called “path breaking [showing] incredible foresight and courage”,³ which says as much about the conference’s content as it does about the state of IR at the time, as far as the discipline’s discussion of religion is concerned. It was however the explicit religious motivation behind Al Qaeda’s attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, which truly forced religion onto the IR agenda. Household IR names now acknowledged religion’s importance for international relations, just as they admitted the challenge

¹ Armstrong, K. (2009) GOD. *Foreign Policy*: 175. p. 55.

² Fox, J. (2009) Integrating Religion into International Relations Theory. In Haynes, J. (ed.) *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics*. Oxon and New York: Routledge. p. 288.

³ E-INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (2013) *The “Turn to Religion” in International Relations*. [Online] Accessible via: <http://www.e-ir.info/2013/12/03/the-turn-to-religion-in-international-relations-theory/> [Accessed 20 March, 2015].

that it posed for IR as a discipline. Keohane, for example, noted that “all mainstream theories of world politics are relentlessly secular [ignoring] the impact of religion, despite the fact that world-shaking political movements have so often been fueled by religious fervour.”⁴ In what has come to be called IR’s “post-secular debate,” a consensus formed around this sentiment with scholars setting out to unveil the roots of the international system in order to make sense of IR’s neglect of religion. This endeavor overwhelmingly traced back to the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio* (whose realm, his religion) implemented by the Peace of Augsburg in 1555 and consolidated by the Westphalian Treaties in 1648, whereby religion, whose extension across Europe had been fought for since the Protestant Reformation, was removed from the international sphere and became the prerogative of each ruler to impose within his own political realm. Representative of this view, Philpott (2002) argued that the Westphalian proclamation of sovereignty as the form of political authority along with Augsburg’s *cuius regio, eius religio* principle had a secularizing effect on the international system by virtue of them limiting the influence that the Catholic Church yielded on politics either directly or through the Holy Roman Emperor. In addition, states, although still able to promote the work of churches and religion *within* their realm, would increasingly refrain from doing so. This was most conspicuously evident with states’ promotion of religious freedom; a principle strongly influenced by the Protestant Reformation of 1517, adopted first by revolutionary France and America, and subsequently throughout the Western world at large. Moreover, as states promoted religion less actively, Europe’s religious powers would exercise fewer, if any, temporal prerogatives both nationally, and much less transnationally. These interrelated secularizing trends consolidated in Europe, and were exported internationally, during the centuries following Westphalia, producing what Philpott terms “The Westphalian Synthesis”; that is, the modern authority structure of the international system characterised by the

⁴ Keohane, R. O. (2002) The Globalization of Informal Violence, Theories of World Politics, and “Liberalism of Fear”. *Dialogue IO*. 1 (1). p. 29.

general rule of non-intervention in the governance of other states (notable exceptions, such as interventions on the part of Cold War superpowers, notwithstanding). IR would come to reflect this perception of a secular international system with its main Realist theory, in its Hobbesian, classical and Waltzian variant, holding that states are concerned with gaining relative military power, including the forces, population, technology, wealth and taxation power needed to support it, in order to maximize their security.⁵

Against this understanding of the international system, the 9/11, 2001 attacks became viewed by some as the “return” of religion to international relations. Petito & Hatzopoulos (2003) depicted this view in almost apocalyptic terms, asserting that “religion was the object that needed to vanish for modern international politics to come into being” and that “the rejection of religion [seems] to be inscribed in the genetic code of the [IR] discipline.”⁶ Thomas (2000) asserted that, in light of increasing importance of religion to international relations, IR scholars should start to “take religion seriously.”⁷ Others have since challenged the conventional understanding of the international system as one in which religious and political realms have, until recently, been separated, suggesting rather that religion persisted in the international political realm throughout and beyond the seventeenth century. Barnett (2011), for example, shows that Christian missionaries from the sixteenth century onwards facilitated European colonialism, just as the latter facilitated the proselytizing ventures of missionaries. Colonialism not only gave missionaries confidence to venture onto once inhospitable lands, but indeed compelled them to do so, as opting out would stand in contrast to their proselytizing purpose. Missionaries’ evangelization, establishment of schools as well as the advances in health and science that they brought with them, in turn, and perhaps unwittingly, proved to natives the superiority of European civilization, as was part of

⁵ Philpott, D. (2002) The Challenge of September 11 to Secularism in International Relations. *World Politics*. 55 (1). p. 66-95.

⁶ Petito, F. and Hatzopoulos, P., *Religion in International Relations: The Return from Exile*. p. 1.

⁷ Thomas, S. M. (2000) Taking Religious and Cultural Pluralism Seriously: The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Society. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*. 29 (3). p. 816.

colonial administrators' strategy to exert power and control of colonies. Moreover, by making domestic populations susceptible to European ideas, such as the moral economics of Adam Smith, the missionaries' "civilizing efforts" facilitated the job and profits of foreign investors who came along with colonial administrators. Barnett furthermore points to The World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1910 as a more recent example of colonialism's missionary dimension and, by extension, Christianity's role in shaping the Western international order. With reference to conference proceedings, he shows that the economic and political elites in attendance saw missionary activity as a critical element of Western expansion and that, although religious and political authorities were considered and discussed as distinct categories, there was an appreciation that they together could perform the civilizing mission that would facilitate a Western-led international order.⁸

In a similar vein, Hurd (2011) shows the Christian roots of Kant's moral philosophy that has so profoundly influenced the Liberal world order. She argues that Kant's universal, moral principles held that, for sectarian differences between Catholic and Protestant Christians to be overcome, morality was to be grounded, not in ecclesiastical theology, but in the individual. Crucially, this formulation did not dismiss the metaphysical dimension presupposed by all moral agents. Rather, it proposed a "generic form of Christianity" which carried traces of Christian ecclesiastical theology in that it, firstly, placed singular conceptions of reason and command morality above question; secondly, held Kantian philosophy as the ultimate authority on reason; thirdly, defined sectarianism within Christianity as the greatest danger to morality and, finally, delegitimized a non-Kantian, non-theistic perspective in public life. By virtue of these traits, Kant's fourfold morality retained the Augustinian command model and was, as such, a form of "rational religion". To drive home this

⁸ Barnett, M. N. (2011) Another Great Awakening? International Relations Theory and Religion. In: Snyder, J. (ed.) *Religion and International Relations Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press. p. 91-115.

point, she refers to Theodor van Leeuwen's assertion that "the idea of a secular basis for politics is not only culturally European but specifically Christian"; for van Leeuwen, "secular culture was...Christianity's gift to the world."⁹

For both Hurd and Barnett, then, the "secular" is not so much a break with the past as it is an extension of it, and it is the co-constitutive relationship between the "secular" and the "religious" that has created the international order; not a separation of the two whereby politics was conducted at the expense of religion. Though their understanding of religion's role in international relations is different than that of Philpott (2002), Petito and Hatzopoulos (2003) and others, and while it certainly holds important implications for how we understand religion as a category of analysis (a discussion that will be taken up in chapter 2), it does not discount that the IR discipline has developed within a secular ontology. As Fox (2007) rightfully observes, religion need not have been absent from international relations for IR scholars to have been "blinded by their secular paradigms" to pay attention to it.¹⁰ Indeed, since the emergence of Realism as the dominant IR theory following the First Great Debate, the discipline has prioritized material factors - whether from a positivist or post-positivist epistemology - at the expense of ideational, and much less religious, ones. Realism in both its classical- and neo-variants has been challenged, of course, above all from scholars in the Liberal and Constructivist camps. However, scholars in these camps have overwhelmingly promoted an equally materialist alternative in the case of Liberalism, and, though recognizing the importance of ideational factors like religion, subsumed the latter within the broader category of identity in the case of Constructivism.¹¹ In this light, it becomes clear why

⁹ Hurd, E. S. (2011) *Secularism and International Relations Theory*. In: Snyder, J. (ed.) *Religion and International Relations Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press. p. 66-7.

¹⁰ Fox, J. (2009) *Integrating Religion into International Relations Theory*. In Haynes, J. (ed.) *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics*. Oxon and New York: Routledge. p. 276.

¹¹ See i.e. Fox, J. (2006) *The Multiple Impacts of Religion on International Relations: Perceptions and Reality*. *Politique étrangère*. 4. p 1059-1071 and Haynes, J. (2007) *An Introduction to International Relations and Religion*. Essex: Pearson Education Limited, p. 1-30.

important international events with ostensibly religious dimensions, such as the Islamic Revolution of Iran or Pope John Paul II's challenge to Communist regimes of Eastern Europe, have overwhelmingly been depicted as events where religion is but an instrumental tool to yield political power, in case of the Islamic Revolution, or epiphenomenal, in the case of the USSR's collapse.

Increasingly, post-secular scholars suggest that the main IR theories not only *should*, but indeed *could* accommodate religion, though there are some noteworthy exceptions to this trend amongst the post-secular debate's earlier works. As Bellin (2008) observes, the volumes by Petito & Hatzopoulos (2003) and Fox & Sandler (2004) between them call for a "paradigm shift" in IR to acknowledge the centrality of religion in international relations; a move that she rightly characterizes as "majestic ambition" which appears more aimed at (redundantly) convincing audiences that religion matters, rather than understanding *how* and *when* it does.¹² By and large, however, post-secular scholars agree that IR's main theories can serve as useful tools, either as standalone theories or as part of an eclectic theoretical framework, and do so without their intellectual coherence being disturbed. Realism, for example, though ideological factors like religion may not be able to overrule the material interests so central to Realist thought, they could assert causal power on foreign policy where material and structural factors permit; that is, so long as a state's vital security or economic interests are upheld.¹³ Furthermore, with its flexible conceptualization of "interest," "power" and "rationality," Realism in its classical strand, offers a role for religion as part of such key concepts. Within this understanding, maximizing the national interest can mean bolstering a state's religious legitimacy in a given social and political context.¹⁴ Liberalism, with its focus on international institutions and norms, could equally accommodate

¹² Bellin, E. (2012) Faith in Politics. New Trends in the Study of Religion and Politics. *World Politics*. 60 (2). p. 338-9.

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 340-1.

¹⁴ Sandal, N. and James, P. (2010) Religion and International Relations theory: Towards a mutual understanding. *European Journal of International Relations*. 17 (1). p. 8.

religion by incorporating transnational religious organizations like the Catholic Church and the Organization of the Islamic Conference.¹⁵ Assuming that religion classifies as an ideational factor, Constructivism provides perhaps the most natural intellectual terrain on which to explore religion's role in international relations, given the eminence that this IR paradigm gives to ideational factors in determining structures and events in international politics.

The post-secular debate remains pertinent today, more than a decade after the attacks of 9/11, 2001 that captured the attention of IR scholars around the study of religion and IR, and almost two decades after Petito and Hatzopoulos' founding conference on the same topic. Prominent publications in recent years, including Snyder's edited volume *Religion and International Relations Theory* (2011) and Shah, Stepan & Toft's *Rethinking Religion and World Affairs* (2012) suggest that the topic is far from a fad, as do ongoing research programs like Brown University's *Religion and Internationalism* project, set up in specifically to address the post-secular debate,¹⁶ and the sponsored section of the 2015 International Studies Association, dedicated to the study of religion and IR on the grounds that paper proposals in recent years "indicate a widespread interest" in this topic.¹⁷ Empirically, too, religion's importance to international relations seems a long way from retreating. As recently as October 2015, the leader of Israel's Yesh Atid Party, Yair Lapid, when asked to characterize the unfolding violence between Israel and Palestinians in the West Bank, said that the decades-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict is now "more religious [...] it is about Islam and Jews."¹⁸ In a similar vein, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), which more than a year after

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 19.

¹⁶ BROWN UNIVERSITY (2015) Religion and Internationalism Project. [Online] Available from: <https://www.brown.edu/academics/humanities/initiatives/religion-and-internationalism-project>. [Accessed: 1 March, 2015].

¹⁷ INTERNATIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION (2015) *Religion and International Relations Section*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.isanet.org/JSA/Sections/REL>. [Accessed: 15 February 2015].

¹⁸ British Broadcasting Corporation. 2015. *HARDtalk with Yair Lapid* [Online]. [Accessed 29 October 2015]. Available from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b06nxsjd/hardtalk-yair-lapid-leader-yesh-atid-party-israel>

Obama vowed to “degrade and ultimately destroy”¹⁹ continues to gain recruits and consolidate territory, and is increasingly discussed in terms of the substantive religious dimension of its political and military strategy, as opposed to its leaders’ indiscriminate quest for expansive political power.²⁰

While scholars in the post-secular debate have indeed moved beyond descriptive accounts to discussing how IR theory provides heuristic tools with which to examine religion’s role in international relations, studies which invoke empirics to do so are few and far between. Some do exist, to be sure, including a Doctoral thesis by Bettiza (2012), *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Desecularization of American Foreign Policy, 1990-2012*, which conceptually and empirically explores the effects of religion on US foreign policy, and examines those within a Historical Sociological approach to Foreign Policy Analysis.²¹ Sheikh (2012) is another prominent example; she conceptualizes a substantive understanding of religion with reference to Security Studies insights, and applies it (albeit in limited detail) to the study of militant Islamism. The post-secular debate could benefit from, and advance through, more such studies, however, and it is in this vein that the present project seeks to make its contribution. As the examples of events with ostensibly religious dimensions mentioned thus far in the chapter indicate, the sources of religion’s influence on international relations are more than one and include, for example, non-state (Al Qaeda) or institutional (Pope John Paul II) ones, just as religion manifests, not in a single generic form, but in distinct forms like Christianity and Islam.²² This offers a range of possibilities as far as research enquiry and design are concerned.

¹⁹ NEW YORK TIMES (2014) Obama's Evolution on ISIS [Online] Available from: http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/06/09/world/middleeast/obama-isis-strategy.html?_r=0 [Accessed: 1 October, 2015].

²⁰ See i.e. McCants, W. (2015) *The ISIS Apocalypse: The History Strategy and Doomsday Vision of the Islamic State*. New York: St. Martin's Press and Wood, G. in THE ATLANTIC (2015) What ISIS Really Wants. [Online] Available from: <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/03/what-isis-really-wants/384980/> [Accessed: 1 October, 2015].

²¹ Bettiza, G. 2012. *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Desecularization of American Foreign Policy, 1990-2012*. PhD Thesis, London School of Economics.

²² How we should define “religion” merits an intricate discussion, which is taken up in the following chapter (2).

1.1 Research question, argument and contribution

Approaching the study of religion's role in international relations from a foreign policy perspective is, in my view, particularly interesting as foreign policy, notwithstanding the ostensible significance of non-state actors such as Al Qaeda, remains the basis for how states, or the agents that represent them, interact with each other and, by extension, determines the dynamics of the international system to a significant extent, whether in a regional or global context. Moreover, approaching the study of religion in international relations through multiple case studies which capture distinct religions, seems to me, crucial because it allows for the identification of potential patterns of regularity across time and/or space which for myself and, I expect, IR scholars, is of particular interest as such scientific enquiry is what distinguishes our discipline from, for example, the humanities, which, as identified earlier, have already shown and established the importance of religion.

The Middle East provides a relevant focus of a study into religion's role in foreign policy for reasons that may seem obvious given the region's many religiously-defined states and the frequent, if constant, religiously-charged rhetoric employed by their leaders. Such characteristics do not, of course, say much about whether religion, in these contexts, features but superfluously or holds deeper meaning(s), though such a critique would apply to any given regional focus. A more constructive note would be that said characteristics do not distinguish the region from other parts of the world with similar characteristics, such as South Asia where both Pakistan and Afghanistan are official Islamic Republics whose leaders frequently employ Islamic discourse, distinct though such discourse may be from that employed by Islamist non-state actors within those same countries. However, unlike South Asia, the Middle East, which I take to stretch from Maghreb in the West to the Arabian Peninsula in the East, comprises of states with distinct religions and major religious

denominations. As I discussed above, such a dimension is significant in an IR study of this kind because it allows for patterns of regularity across religions, if they exist, to be identified.

As will be discussed in detail further ahead in this chapter, Israel, Iran and Saudi Arabia, which respectively represent a Jewish,²³ Shi'a Islamic and Sunni Islamic state, lend themselves well as case studies for that reason, and, especially so, during the period following the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, when all three of those countries, as well as the region in general, witnessed an intensification of existing religious ideologies and the birth of new ones. This became reflected in the rise to power of foreign policy leaders who were markedly different than those of the status quo, with Menachem Begin forming two consecutive religious-nationalist coalitions in Israel following the latter's 1977 and 1984 elections, and with Ayatollah Khomeini founding the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979 following the Islamic Revolution that had been brewing for years prior. Saudi Arabia, though exhibiting more continuity given its conservative monarchical rule, saw its King Fahd change his title from "His Majesty" to the "The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques" to reflect an intensification of religious sentiment within the country. Based on these observations, and underpinned by IR's post-secular debate, I have developed the following research question:

What was the role of religion in Israeli foreign policy under Prime Minister Menachem Begin (1977-1984), Iranian foreign policy under Ayatollah Khomeini (1979-89), and Saudi Arabian foreign policy under Crown Prince, later King, Fahd bin Abdulaziz (1975-95)?

As will be discussed in more detail further ahead in this chapter, I have approached this question through a Constructivist-Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) framework as it, with its components

²³ "Jewish" is a loaded term that does not necessarily take on a religious meaning and, if it does, may do so in a way that intertwines with factors such as nationalism. As will be detailed further ahead in this chapter, "Jewish", in the context in which it is discussed in this thesis, *does* entail an important religious dimension, hence its inclusion.

respectively prioritizing ideas and individual agency, provides an intellectual terrain, as well as a set analytical tools, to understand the role of religion in foreign policy. The choice to centre the research question around Begin, Khomeini and Fahd reflects those leaders' disproportionately strong influence on foreign policy, whether by constitutional design (Iran and Saudi Arabia) or by forceful personalities (Begin), as well as the importance of religion to all three leaders, despite their notable differences in education and vocation. It also reflects a necessity, for a project like this one, of a research focus such as that of leadership, in order that the findings yielded are substantive ones which show *how* religion matters in international relations.

In the thesis' case studies, I argue, and show, that the leaders' religious beliefs, or religious tradition in the case of Fahd, are not only part of their respective world-views but that they shape them in a significant way which reflects in their foreign policy doctrines and, by extension, their foreign policy outcomes. In the case of Menachem Begin, that means that his belief, which I show is partly based on religion, in the Jewish people as a grand people whose redemption will occur as a result of its presence on *Eretz Yisrael* (Land of Israel), reflects in a foreign policy doctrine of territorial maximalism vis-a-vis the Palestinian territories²⁴ and full, contractual peace with neighbouring states to ensure the Jewish people's sovereignty over *Eretz Yisrael*. It moreover means that two of Begin's main foreign policy decisions, the Camp David Accords and invasion of Lebanon, cannot be fully understood without reference to Begin's religious beliefs. In the case of Khomeini, it means his religiously-derived belief in the righteousness of the Islamic Republic of Iran and an Islamic world order, reflects in a foreign policy doctrine that is fiercely anti-Western and focused on exporting the Islamic Revolution which, in turn, is tied to consolidating the Islamic Republic of Iran. Two of Khomeini's main foreign policy decisions, prolonging the Iran-Iraq war and his fatwa

²⁴ It is possible to dispute whether Begin's policy vis-a-vis Judea and Samaria would classify as "foreign" policy, as he saw those areas as part and parcel of *Eretz Yisrael*. However, several scholars (e.g. Sprinzak, 1989; Tessler, 1986 and Weissbrod, 1981) do discuss the issue in such terms and, moreover, the international borders which denote the West Bank as Palestinian indeed render the matter one of foreign policy.

(religious ruling) against Salman Rushdie, can thus only be understood in the context of his religious beliefs. In the case of Fahd, his safeguarding of the religio-political symbiosis between the *Ulema* (Islamic clergy) and House of Saud, though arguably more a reflection of a necessary tradition than his personal faith, reflects in his foreign policy doctrine focused on assuming a leadership role in Arab-Islamic affairs. Fahd's opposition to the Camp David Accords and support of the Palestinian issue more broadly - both of which were rendered Islamic, rather than strictly Arab issues, through Khomeini's discursive efforts - can thus not be understood outside the context of religion, most importantly the religio-political symbiosis. While another of Fahd's foreign policy outcomes - his invitation of US troops into the Kingdom in the context of Operation Desert Storm and the subsequent Gulf War - reflects all but a need for defence assistance to combat Iraqi aggressors, Fahd's efforts to legitimize this foreign policy, which included petitioning several *fatwas* from the Kingdom's *Ulema*, cannot either be understood without reference to the Saud-Wahhab alliance.

In each of the case studies, I furthermore argue that religion comprised an important discursive tool with which the leaders legitimized their foreign policies to the public, and I show that the meaning of religion, as framed by the leaders, corresponded to the context in which it was invoked. In the case of Begin, this meant framing the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty (Camp David Accords, Framework I) with Biblical references containing themes related to peace amongst nations, and framing Israeli sovereignty over Judea and Samaria (Camp David Accords, Framework I) with reference to Biblical excerpts denoting the Jewish people's rightful claim to those territories. In the context of the invasion of Lebanon, it meant framing the losses of lives in broad, spiritual terms. For his part, Khomeini, used historical analogies invoking important Shi'a Islamic figures, events and concepts to frame the Iran-Iraq war's purpose, its resulting material and personal losses, and its termination, just as he stressed *Sharia* (Islamic law) in the context of his *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie.

Similarly, Fahd framed his opposition to the Camp David Accords in terms of Islamic duty, just as he framed his invitation of US troops as a necessary means to protect Islamic interests and lands.

According to these findings, I conclude that the role of religion in foreign policy for each of the case studies is two-fold. First, religion takes on the role of shaping the worldview of the foreign policy decision makers and by extension also their foreign policy doctrines and foreign policies. I do not claim that there is always a strong causal link between religion and foreign policy outcome, though such a link should certainly not be dismissed in some cases, but rather that the foreign policy outcomes in question must necessarily be made sense of with reference to the leaders' religious beliefs or, in the case of Fahd, the religious tradition that shaped his worldview. Second, religion takes on the role of a discursive tool which legitimizes the leaders' foreign policies to the public. In this context, I engage in a broader discussion about religion as a malleable concept whose meaning, does not (necessarily) manifest in rigid pro- and pre-scriptions of behaviour, but affords the individuals believer a multitude of seemingly contradictory interpretations. Accordingly, I argue that when Begin, Khomeini and Fahd use religion to frame their foreign policies in ways that, at times, seem irreconcilable with one another, they do not necessarily do so in a disingenuous way that undermines their religious beliefs. It may, of course, be the case that they do so; that can only truly be known by them. However, in such an event, they do so with a view to legitimize a foreign policy which, in itself, is contrived by way of religion. This further reinforces my answer to the research question, which is that the foreign policies of Begin, Khomeini and Fahd cannot be understood outside the context of religion.

The contribution of this thesis is two-fold. First, in discussing religion's role in foreign policy from within a Constructivist-FPA framework, the project shows *how* religion matters in international relations. This moves IR's post-secular debate beyond its current observations which

overwhelmingly discuss *that* religion matters and which, by and large, is yet to move beyond the discussion of IR theory's suitability for the study of religion in international relations, to its application. Second, by showing that religion is a malleable concept which can nonetheless be studied as a substantive phenomenon (discussed in depth in chapter 2 and demonstrated throughout the case studies), the project offers a conceptual contribution to the post-secular debate whose scholars are yet to move towards building consensus around a standard definition of religion, which has negative implications for identifying patterns of regularity across studies.

Alternative explanations

Scholars from other analytical angles would most certainly find alternative explanations to my findings and argument. A modernist account, for example, would hold that religion's role in foreign policy is an instrumental one in that it is employed by leaders to suit their material interests. Halliday (2003) discusses how, in the case of Islam - as a political phenomenon, not a theology - this is seen by Islamic symbols and doctrines being put differently to different societies and at different moments in time.²⁵ When religion is employed, despite differing interpretations, it is represented as a true reading of doctrine, which he describes as a "constant redefin[ition] and reselect[ion] to serve contemporary purposes."²⁶ A given interpretation is designed, he argues, to meet both needs and interests of those responsible for the interpretations.²⁷ Roy (2007) similarly stresses that the relationship between Islam and politics is not a single, timeless one, but rather one that has been manifested in sociologically diverse ways that, oftentimes, is in line with preferences of leaders.²⁸ The understanding that modernist scholars like Halliday and Roy have of Islam as a malleable concept that is subject to differing interpretations, and that manifests differently across socio-political conditions, is not at odds with that which this thesis employs of religion in general, including Islam. The modernist position

²⁵ Halliday, F. (2003) *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation: Religion and Politics in the Middle East*. London & New York: I.B. Tauris, p. 207.

²⁶ Halliday, F. (2000) *Nation and Religion in the Middle East*. London: Saqi Books. p. 9.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Roy, O. (1994) *The Failure of Political Islam*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, p. vii.

does differ, however, in holding that such malleability and distinct manifestations of religion are a result of instrumentalism employed to suit material interests. This is similar to the Realist - especially in its neo-variant - treatment of religion's role in international relations (discussed in more detail on pages 9-10) which prioritizes material factors at the expense of ideational and - much more - religious ones. As Halliday and Roy would argue, such a view holds that if the latter occur at all, they do so as efforts to reinforce material security. Whilst this thesis disputes neither the idea that religion's pre- and pro-scriptions wax and wane across time and space, nor that leaders employ religion discursively to rally support around their desired political outcomes, it differs from materialist interpretations in that it does not consider such actions and discourse as departures from religion itself. This understanding is based on the view that religion is a malleable concept whose interpretation necessarily depends on contextualization within socio-political circumstances for the true meaning of religion to unfold (this is the subject matter of chapter 2 "Thinking about Religion: Key Definition and Concepts). As this is the case, the waxing and waning of interpretation becomes the essence of religion. As the case studies in chapter 4-6 will demonstrate, the leaders in question certainly depict the role of religion in different ways depending on that which they are discussing, and where they are doing so. But, as all were men of religion - also demonstrated in the case studies - such actions and discourse do not constitute departures from religion.

Another alternative explanation may come from the ethno-nationalist school of thought, and would hold that religion operates as but one of many factors which, collectively, motivate a leader who belongs to an "ethno-nation," to act in a particular fashion that is in line with his aspirations for the latter and its people. Specifically, it is what Anthony D. Smith calls "mythomoteur" - a compound of the French words for "myth" and "engine," or "constitutive political myth" that is thought to give the people of an ethno-nation their sense of purpose.²⁹ It is propelled by a specific understanding of the ethno-nation conceived, by Smith and in the ethno-nationalist school of thought more generally, as a

²⁹ Smith, A. D. (1988) *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Oxford & Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers.

nation that comprises of people with a shared ethnic ancestry as well as features like language, religion, symbols and traditions, and to which membership depends not on political affinity or possible assimilation, but on ethnic descent. In this ethno-nationalist understanding, religion does not operate in isolation. An ethno-nationalist account of the foreign policy of Begin, Khomeini and Fahd would undoubtedly be an analytically rich one. However, by subsuming religion into more general categories it would, like Constructivists analyses of religion have hitherto done (see more on this on page 10), not hone in on the role of religion in foreign policy. As I have reiterated throughout this introductory chapter, the purpose of this thesis - indeed what its contribution lies in - is to address religion as a stand-alone variable and seek to explain its role in foreign policy on that basis. This is rendered problematic, of course, when - as chapter two discusses - religion is a variable that is defined by its malleability, which in turn is defined by the socio-political context in which religion operates. This means that an analysis of religion's role cannot, and should not, be separated from contextual factors. Though an overlap with Smith's argument above exists here, the purpose of this thesis is not to explain religion's role in foreign policy with reference to culture in which religion features, because the gap in IR literature that this thesis seeks to address is precisely one created by studies that have done either that (Constructivist studies, in particular) or have avoided the discussion of religion altogether (Realist and Liberalist studies, in particular).

1.2 Methodology, case selection and case design

The marginalization of religion's role in the study of IR is, as we have seen above, attributable to both ontological and epistemological tendencies in the discipline: IR scholarship has generally overlooked religion as an influential factor given its "secular" reading of international relations and, moreover, largely focused on conducting analysis whereby states are taken to be unitary actors which behave rationally and in response to systemic-level forces. An shift away from the "secular" study of international relations can be implemented through scholarship, such as the present one,

which lucidly includes religion as a variable of study. This means more than simply including religion as a supplement to the analysis; an “add and stir” approach that scholars like Hurd (2011) and Sheikh (2012) have rightfully warned against, as it would not significantly move the analysis beyond description or, as Sheikh (2012) puts it, “does not contribute to clarifying relations between religion and IR.”³⁰ On the other hand, treating religion “seriously” should not mean emphasizing its role in international relations to an extent whereby it is rendered disproportionately important. As Jervis (1994) points out in his review of Goldstein & Keohane’s edited volume *Ideas and Foreign Policy: beliefs, institutions and political change* (1993), setting a null hypothesis which seeks to disprove that material interests can account entirely for state behaviour, as the authors in question do, sets a task that is “much too easy” and “make[s] a straw man of the materialist position” by guaranteeing to highlight the importance of ideas. As Jervis notes, if any unexplained variance from the material explanation will be attributed to ideas, they are bound to appear important;³¹ treating religion in this way, would incur a similar problems. The research design laid out in the following sections has been developed with these important caveats in mind.

Research design and case selection

The research question has been approached through three case studies which respectively focus on Israeli, Iranian and Saudi Arabian foreign policy under the leaderships of Begin, Khomeini and Fahd. A multiple-case study design was chosen over a single, intensive case-study one in order to overcome the main drawback commonly associated with the latter, namely that the idiosyncratic features of a single case shape the research question.³² In this study of religion’s role in foreign

³⁰ Sheikh, M. K. (2012) How does religion matter? Pathways to religion in International Relations. *Review of International Studies*. 38 (2). p. 374.

³¹ Jervis, R. (1994/95) Review of Goldstein, J. and Keohane, R. (1993) *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*. *Political Science Quarterly*. 109 (5). p. 907-909.

³² George, A. L. and Bennett, A. (2005) *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press. p. 69-70.

policy that upon encouragement from post-secular scholarship seeks to take religion “seriously” the use of multiple case studies has therefore been deemed all the more appropriate. The case studies were not selected with a view to yield explicitly comparative findings, but so that inferences may be drawn from the individual cases in order to identify patterns of regularity across them. George & Bennett note that “case selection is an opportunistic as well as a structured process.”³³ Their observation adequately reflects the selection of the Middle East as a regional focus for this project, as the latter is generally understood to be characterized by ideological, often with an explicit religious dimension, fervour. George & Bennett go on to note, cases where a variable - in this case religion - is “at an extreme value” are particularly useful for heuristic purposes.³⁴ Israel, Iran and Saudi Arabia have been selected as case studies because they stand out as emblematic of the characterization mentioned above in that all three states define themselves and their forms of government with reference to religion, in one way or another.

This is most evident in the case of Iran which, since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, has been an Islamic Republic whose executive authority is, by constitutional law, a Shi’a cleric of the highest rank and whose constitution requires state compliance with Islamic law in domestic and foreign affairs. With regards to the latter, §16 under Article 3 of the Islamic Republic’s 1979 constitution, holds that the country’s foreign policy is “[framed] on the basis of Islamic criteria, fraternal commitment to all Muslims, and unsparing support to the freedom fighters of the world.”³⁵ In Saudi Arabia, although the leading figures in the royal family - not the clergy - hold executive office, the former run the state’s affairs according to the Wahhabi interpretation of Islamic law.

³³ Ibid. p. 69.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ CONSTITUTION OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN (1979) Available from: [https://faculty.unlv.edu/pwerth/Const-Iran\(abridge\).pdf](https://faculty.unlv.edu/pwerth/Const-Iran(abridge).pdf) [Accessed: 10 September, 2014.]

Indeed, the first Article of the constitution holds that the Kingdom “is a sovereign Arab Islamic state with Islam as its religion; God’s Book and the Sunnah of His Prophet [...] are its constitution [...]”³⁶

With regards to government principles, Article 8 similarly states that the “Government in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is based on the premise of justice, consultation, and equality in accordance with the Islamic Shari’ah.”³⁷

The case of Israel is more complex. While proclaimed a “Jewish state” in its Declaration of Establishment, the meaning of “Jewish” is particularly intricate and has indeed taken on different meanings for different Governments and, by extension, their foreign policies. This has to do with Jews being an ethno-religious group, rather than a strictly religious one, as a result of which “Jewish” encompasses secular, historical and/or religious meanings. The wide-ranging constituents whose support was needed for the Declaration of the Establishment of Israel in 1948 indeed had different views of what should constitute the Jewish state, with the secular left wanting to forego any reference to Divine providence and religious Jews, as well as those “anchored” in “Jewish tradition”, wanting to include one. The consensus-building document finally included a reference to *Tzur Israel* (or, Rock of Israel); a phrase typically used as a “euphemism for God”, but one that is vague enough to allow for non-religious interpretations, as well.³⁸ As chapter 2 and 4 will show, Menachem Begin’s right-wing Likud government was religiously inclined in its interpretation of the “Jewish” state, and much more so than the Labour-led governments which preceded him.

³⁶ CONSTITUTION OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA (n.d.) Available from: <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/quotes/constitution-of-saudi-arabia-article-8-government-principles> [Accessed: 11 September, 2014].

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ JERUSALEM CENTER FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS (n.d.) The Constitution of the State of Israel. [Online] Available from: <http://www.jcpa.org/dje/articles/const-intro-93.htm>. [Accessed: September 15, 2014]. See also Frisch, H. & Sandler, S. (2004) Religion, State, and the International System in the Israel-Palestinian Conflict. *International Political Science Review*: p. 79-80.

Within-case design

The within-case study design is inspired primarily by the work of George & Bennett (2005), which proposes that case studies be *focused* and *structured*, as such a design render case study findings relevant beyond their immediate context without, importantly, preventing idiosyncratic features of stand-alone cases from being addressed. This in turn overcomes the critique by Rosenau (1968) and others that, where case studies lack “scientific consciousness”, their otherwise interesting findings do not produce orderly cumulation of knowledge.³⁹ For this project, which seeks to advance the post-secular debate, in important part, by deriving patterns of regularity from substantive empirical findings, a focused and structured case study design is particularly appropriate.

The case studies of this project are *focused* in that they concentrate on the foreign policy of specific leaders within a bounded period of time. For Israel, Iran and Saudi Arabia respectively, that means a focus on the foreign policy of Prime Minister Menachem Begin (1977-84), Ayatollah Khomeini (1979-89) and Crown Prince, later King, Fahd bin Abdulaziz (1975-1995). The focus on leadership has been adopted primarily based on the observation that the leaders in question yielded disproportionate influence on foreign policy.⁴⁰ By no means does this imply that they were above the influence of government dynamics and, even less, public opinion and systemic factors. Indeed, the influence of such factors, however, leadership is, in these cases, by far the most decisive and the study thus merits to be approached through its lens.

Moreover, this focus is strengthened when coupled with the observation that the leaders were ardent believers, in the case of Khomeini, observed religious tradition in the case of Fahd, and fell

³⁹ George, A. L. and Bennett, A. (2005) *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press. p. 69-71.

⁴⁰ The leaders' influence on foreign policy varied across the case studies; this is detailed in chapter 3.

somewhere in between in the case of Begin.⁴¹ Khomeini, for example, held the position *Marja'* (source of emulation) and was regarded by his followers as *Imam*, a meaningful title bestowed only upon those regarded as rightful successors of the Prophet Muhammad.⁴² Less personal and more resultant of social and political tradition, but meaningful in its own right, Fahd changed his official title from “His Majesty” to “Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques” shortly after ascending to the throne in 1982.⁴³ Finally, Begin proclaimed that “the Bible is our Mandate” as the basis for his territorial maximalist policies,⁴⁴ just as his electoral victory was considered by Orthodox Rabbi, Meir Kahane, as a “miracle of miracles” because Israel would finally have as its Prime Minister “a man [who] actually speaks the “one little word [God]” that we have waited to hear”.⁴⁵ More to it, Begin, Khomeini and Fahd led their states during a religiously-charged historical period, with Islamist sentiment burgeoning regionally, and right-wing Zionism of religio-nationalist character thriving inside Israel and in the Jewish Diaspora. As chapter 3 details, this largely resulted from Israel’s decisive victory in the Arab-Israeli war of 1967 which, in delegitimizing the hitherto dominant pan-Arabist ideology, stimulated Islamism and, in turn, convinced many Jews of Godly intervention. Both trajectories were furthermore strengthened by the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979.

The case studies of this project are *structured* in the sense that they have each been developed according to the same three overarching research criteria, inspired by the Constructivist-FPA theoretical framework (detailed later in this chapter), as well as the thesis’ conceptualization of “religious beliefs” as comprised by a community of believers (“religion”) and, interrelated, the

⁴¹ The religious identities of Khomeini, Begin and Fahd are respectively discussed in detail in case study chapters 4,5 and 6.

⁴² OXFORD ISLAMIC STUDIES ONLINE (2015) Khomeini, Ruhollah al-Musavi. [Online] Available from: <http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t236/e0457> [Accessed: September 10, 2014].

⁴³ Wiktorowicz, Q. (2004) *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. p. 254.

⁴⁴ Begin, M. (1978) Begin addresses Jewish Leaders in New York, September 20, 1978. In Hurwitz, Harry & Medad, Yisrael, ed. (2011) *Peace in the Making: The Menachem Begin-Anwar El-Sadat Personal Correspondence* Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House in cooperation with the Menachem Begin Heritage Centre, p. 88.

⁴⁵ Sprinzak, E. (1989) The Emergence of the Israeli Radical Right. *Comparative Politics*. 21 (2). p. 174.

individual's personal religious experience ("faith") (detailed in chapter 2). The research criteria, though in reality interrelated, have been separated conceptually in the research design for the purpose of facilitating a structured study that enables the cumulation of knowledge and inference across cases. The first research criterion is *understanding how the leader's religious beliefs forms part of his worldview*. It is based on the perceived need, inspired by the cognitive branch of FPA literature, to understand the psychological environment of the decision maker, in order that we may make an informed evaluation about how he frames the information that he is presented with in a given context.⁴⁶ Addressing this criterium involves addressing a range of sub-criteria as well, including *how and what experiences, circumstances and people shaped his faith? Which doctrinal interpretive tradition did he subscribe to? and how did faith fit into, and was shaped by, other facets of his worldview?* These sub-criteria are inspired particularly by Constructivism's emphasis on intersubjective ideas and the importance of "a community of believers" ("religion") in shaping of the leader's religious beliefs, but also by the "operational coding" approach initiated and popularized by FPA scholars Leites and George, respectively, which holds that leaders' belief system, including their motivational biases, influence leader's decision making.

The second research criterion is *understanding how the leader's religious beliefs influence his foreign policy doctrine, including his perception of national interest*. This is inspired by FPA and Constructivist literature on the role of beliefs and shared ideas on leaders' formation of national interest. It overlaps with the third and final research criterion, whereby the case studies look at *how the leader's religious beliefs reflect in his foreign policies*. For Israel, the foreign policies include the Camp David Accords and Operation Peace for Galilee; for Iran, Khomeini's policy vis-a-vis the Iran-Iraq War and his *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie; and for Saudi Arabia, Fahd's policy vis-a-vis the Arab-Israeli conflict and Operation Desert Shield and Storm. This criterion is approached

⁴⁶ Insights from FPA Margaret and Harold Sprout (1961) were particularly influential in this regard, in highlighting that it is the subjective "psychological environment" of foreign policy decision makers which guides their decision making, as opposed to only the objective, "operational environment". Alden, C. & Aran, A. (2012) *Foreign Policy Analysis: New Approaches*. Oxon: Routledge. p. 19-21.

through the understanding of religious beliefs as malleable and shaped by the contexts in which their interpreter operates (detailed in chapter 2). As such, addressing this research criterion does not necessarily involve identifying a strong correlation between the leader's religious beliefs and his foreign policy decisions (although it could); but inferring where a relationship between the two is likely to exist and how. Achieving this involves addressing sub-criteria like *does religion interplay with other ideational factors, such as nationalism? Which material conceptions of security might be important?* and, in doing so, weighing relevant primary and secondary sources against each other to derive the most plausible inference.

Overcoming limitations

A number of “issues” posed by the conceptual framework merit clarification and are addressed in detail here. The most protruding is that of researcher bias. How can we ascertain that there is indeed a relationship between a leader's religious beliefs, his foreign policy doctrine and foreign policy decisions? As Jervis (1994), amongst others, points out, an “agreement” between foreign policy outcome and a specific idea, does not necessarily imply a causal link between the two or, I would add, even a relationship or connection between them.⁴⁷ This is rendered even more complex when considering the multifaceted and malleable nature of religious beliefs including the latter's intertwining with ideologies like secular nationalism but also its shaping by material factors like economic or military security. The answer is that such a “risk” cannot be overcome entirely; or, as Tetlock (1998) articulates, “No matter what one does, one runs the risk of standing accused of either political naïveté or of surreptitiously advancing an activist agenda [...]”⁴⁸ No one apart from the

⁴⁷ Jervis, R. (1994/95) Review of Goldstein, J. and Keohane, R. (1993) *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*. *Political Science Quarterly*. 109 (5). p. 907-909.

⁴⁸ Tetlock, Philip E. (1998) *Social Psychology and World Politics*. In Gilbert, Daniel T.; Fiske, Susan T.; Lindzey, Gardner. *Handbook of Social Psychology*, 4th ed. Vol. 2. New York: McGraw-Hill, p. 869.

leaders themselves would be able to ascertain the basis on which they acted and indeed whether their religious rhetoric, on which observers judge their motivations and intentions, is spoken truthfully. Nonetheless, various methodological steps can be taken to mitigate this enough that the resulting analysis is balanced and offers a valuable interpretation. One such step is the case selection: as noted above, the leaders in question were chosen in part due to their religious beliefs featuring in a significant way, whether as a result of ardent personal conviction and dedication as in the case of Khomeini, social and political tradition, as in the case of Fahd, or somewhere in between as in the case of Begin. A second, related step is triangulation between sources and methods: each case study offers thick description through a range of materials, including primary sources like archival documents, diary entries, public and private discourse as well as secondary analysis by observant scholars and people who have worked alongside the leaders in question, offering essential insight into the latter's religious beliefs and personalities.

It is worth clarifying here that this project is less aimed at making a causal claim between religion and foreign policy, than it is with explaining the relationship between the religious beliefs of Begin, Khomeini and Fahd and their respective foreign policies. By no means does this discard the existence of such a link. However, as chapter 2 details, religion and the religious beliefs of leaders are malleable and their pre- and pro-scriptions are thus contingent upon the context in which they operate. Given the prominence of religion in the leaders' worldview, a causal link between the latter and the foreign policy outcomes is therefore assumed to exist, but the focus of the project - and the more interesting question - is to explain this relationship rather than simply asserting it. Specifically, this means fully understanding how religion figures in the leaders' worldview and foreign policy doctrine and how it, as a variable, interacts with contextual factors to shape foreign policy outcomes. Through its triangulation of methods and sources the study aims at *descriptive inference*, understood, as Gerring (2012) puts it, to be "a [form] of argumentation" that is "not

(or only secondarily) [a characterization] of the sort of evidence available for causal inference.”⁴⁹

Nor is this method aimed solely at *understanding*, as descriptive inference is often understood to be, but can perform *explanatory* functions by identifying patterns in the social world that may indeed have causal implications. A major benefit follows from the descriptive inference approach, namely that it allows for, indeed emphasizes, analysis in which nuances are accommodated. That is crucial for this study where religious beliefs, which by their very nature are a malleable and multifaceted “variable”, must necessarily be analyzed in a highly contextualized way. To be sure, descriptive inferences are subjective to the extent that they emphasize certain dimensions and by extension produce a particular narrative; however, this subjectivity is much lower than, say, a form of argumentation which narrowly looks for a causal relationship between variables, potentially at the expense of accuracy.⁵⁰ Moreover, this methodology is entirely accommodated by a Constructivist-FPA theoretical framework, developed in the section below, whose components respectively aim at *understanding* and *explaining* and which, moreover, do not make substantive claims about the nature of agents or content of social structures but rather provide a framework for thinking about those properties.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

Constructivism and Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) make up the theoretical framework through which the thesis’ research question is approached. The latter has, alongside the thesis’ conceptualization of “religious beliefs” as comprised by a community of believers (“religion”) and the individual’s personal religious experience (“faith”), inspired the three research criteria developed in the previous section, which in turn provide the structure for the thesis’ case studies. As the

⁴⁹ Gerring, J. (2012) Mere Description. *British Journal of Political Science*. 42. p. 724.

⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 739-40.

sections below will unpack in more detail, Constructivism alerts us to the importance of shared, intersubjective ideas in shaping notions of national interest. This is useful insofar as it provides an intellectual terrain for understanding how “religion,” conceived as a community of believers to which the foreign policy decision maker belongs, shapes perceptions of national interest. Constructivism falls short, however, of offering intellectual tools with which to understand if and how a decision maker’s “faith,” or their personal religious experience, may influence foreign policy decision making. Here, FPA literature - especially its Political Psychology and Cognitive branches - offers valuable insight by highlighting the importance of decision makers’ belief system and cognitive functions like “unmotivated bias” in determining their foreign policy decision making. The sections below outline the intellectual premises of Constructivism and FPA, emphasizing where relevant how and why they have served to inspire the research criteria around which the thesis’ case studies are structured. The usefulness of the Constructivist-FPA framework in understanding the role of religion in foreign policy is picked up again in the thesis’ conclusion (chapter 7), where it is discussed in the context of the thesis’ empirical findings.

Constructivism

A number of scholars introduced above in the context of the post-secular IR debate, including Barnett (2011), Bellin (2008), Hurd (2011) and Sandal & James (2010) point towards Constructivism as a highly suitable framework within which to study religion in international relations. Exploring the fundamental assumptions held across diverse strands of Constructivism, and provided that religion is understood to be an ideational factor (explored chapter 2), one can see why. Constructivists have a “subjectivist” understanding of the political and social world in that they view the world as made up of “social facts”, such as sovereignty and rights, which have no material reality in and of themselves, but whose existence depend on agents’ collectively held belief

in and about them. As such, *ideas matter* crucially in the Constructivist ontology, and it is the understanding by people and states of the world, including their ideas about themselves and others, that determine the way they act. This distinguishes the Constructivist ontology from the Materialist one, which holds that it is the physical world - above all, the autonomous material forces in it - that determine the behaviour of agents and states. Where neo-Realists and -Liberals would typically, in this regard, debate about whether material forces determine, for example, arms races or institution making, Constructivists make no substantive claims about the nature of agents or content of social structures and interactions; they rather provide a framework for thinking about those properties.⁵¹

From this premise, it does *not necessarily* follow that Constructivists disagree with the neo-Realist and neo-Liberal view that military equipment and money constitute power. Critical Constructivists like Weldes (1996), for example, stress the intricate link between ideas, on the one hand, and security-oriented state interests, on the other. Ontologically, the latter are *not* thought to be to “naturally” given or shaped by material forces, even in cases like the Cuban Missile Crisis where US foreign policy could be perceived in such a way. Rather, she is concerned with showing, national interests are socially constructed by a small elite who “thinks into being” the national interest and legitimizes it, to themselves and others, through discourse.⁵² Conversely, some Constructivists emphasize how social internal structures can prompt states to develop national interests that run counter to material conceptions of national interest. In her book *National Interests in International Society* (1996), Finnemore shows how states construct their national interests, and subsequently their behaviour, according to an international social structure defined, not by material conceptions of power, but international organizations and the norms they promote. With reference to UNESCO, the Red Cross and the World Bank, she shows how states have been socialized into perceiving the norms forward by these institutions, as part of their national interest; norms that,

⁵¹ Finnemore, M. and Sikkink, K. (2001) TAKING STOCK: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations in Comparative Politics. *Annual Review of Political Science*. 4. p. 395-8.

⁵² Weldes, J (1996) Constructing National Interests. *European Journal of International Relations*. 2. p. 275-6.

from a Materialist perspective, would be trumped by conventional understandings of state interests.⁵³ In other words, what separates Constructivists from Materialists and Structuralists is not *what* they think about issues like national interest, power and norms - Weldes and Finnemore are examples of how these can vary greatly between Constructivists - but that they understand those issues to be socially mediated.

Crucially, Constructivists hold that the ideas shaping international politics are intersubjective ones, shared between people and irreducible to the individual.⁵⁴ While surely embedded in the individual human brain, ideas are meaningful only when they are collectively held in which cases they can constitute powerful forces of international politics. National identity, for example, itself collectively imagined, comprises the powerful prism through which agents perceive their interests and the basis on which they act.⁵⁵ Equally, social structures are thought to be simultaneously imagined and reinforced by agents' reference to them. Tied to this, is the notion of change. For Constructivists like Adler (2006) it is but "a slight exaggeration to say that if Constructivism is about anything, it is about change";⁵⁶ change referring to alterations in social structures as well as social processes initiated by agents.⁵⁷ Whether patterns in international politics change often or are relatively stable (though never static) is debated amongst Constructivists and dependent, in no small part, on where they fall on the agency-structure spectrum. All are premised, though, on the ontology that change depends on shared ideas and not necessarily, as Materialist theories would have it, on changes in the distribution of material objects like money or natural resources.⁵⁸ And while contingent generalizations or claims about patterns of regularity in international politics indeed comprise much

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Hurd, I (2008) Constructivism. In Reus-Smit, Christian & Snidal, Duncan (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, p. 301.

⁵⁵ Adler, E. (2006) Constructivism and International Relations. In *Handbook of International Relations*. Carlsnaes, Walter; Risse, Thomas; Simmons, Beth. A., (eds.). London: SAGE Publications Ltd. p. 100 and Hurd, I (2008) Constructivism. p. 306.

⁵⁶ Adler, Emanuel (2006) Constructivism and International Relations, p. 102.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

of Constructivist literature, the Constructivist ontology stresses, above all, the social construction of processes; their substantive outcome is of secondary concern.

Equally crucial to the Constructivist ontology is the idea that agents, mostly thought to be states, and structures, are co-constitutive: international norms, for example, are simultaneously imagined and reinforced by agents' reference to them and practice of them. The two - agents and structures - are neither static nor separated, but continuously and profoundly co-constitutive, in that the former "creates" new structures and institutions just as those same structures and institutions socialize and influence agents.⁵⁹ Constructivism's intellectual premises outlined thus far - including its subjectivist nature, the primacy of ideas in shaping perceptions of the national interest and the possibility of change in those ideas, as well as the co-constitutive nature of agents and structures - provide an excellent terrain on which to explore religion's role in foreign policy decision making. This is so not just because religion is considered an ideational factor, and thus potentially assumes a critical role in a Constructivist analysis; but importantly also because Constructivism emphasizes the continuous interplay, or co-constitution, of shared ideas and structures and the potential change which may result from that. The latter thus accommodates the conceptualization of "religion," explored in chapter 2, as a community of believers who share a particular religious interpretative strand, just as it accommodates religious doctrine as a malleable concept that, far from being static, is shaped by - and itself shapes - contextual factors. These premises of Constructivism have inspired, especially, the thesis' second research criterion to "*understand how leader's 'religious beliefs' - that is, the interplay between his personal faith and the community of believers to which he belongs - influence his perception of national interest.*"

Despite Constructivism's emphasis on the co-constitution of agency and structure, Constructivist scholars tend to yield more towards either end of the structure- agency spectrum, possibly

⁵⁹ Hurd, I (2008) Constructivism. p. 304.

because, as Wendt (1987) highlighted in Constructivism's early days, "we lack a self-evident way to conceptualize [agency and structure] and their relationship".⁶⁰ In his article, *Collective Identity Formation and the International State* (1994), Wendt discusses how interaction of states on the systemic level can influence state identities, and by extension their interests, to generate cooperation between them and ultimately an "international state." Constructivism's idea of co-constitutive properties of agents and structures is rendered throughout his argument; however, although drawing on domestic sources of states' identity formation, Wendt takes "a state-centric approach" and largely focuses his analysis on the systemic level.⁶¹ As Hurd (2008) points out, focusing a Constructivist analysis on the state, or any other unit of analysis, is sometimes necessary in order that a certain argument may be brought to bear. However, given that the Constructivist ontology which holds that social interaction on and between all levels of analysis is complicit in the creation of identities, interests, social structures, processes and practices, it is not viable to isolate the units of analyses entirely. As Hurd puts it, "there is no impetus in Constructivism for a zero-sum debate over "which" level provides the most leverage over puzzles."⁶² In the case of an analysis which studies interactions at the systemic-level and takes state-units for granted, a neglect to explicate how the historical construction of states as sovereign entities occurred may have implications for the overall analysis. That said, assumptions and choices regarding which aspects of a puzzle to problematize is encouraged, if unavoidable, in a Constructivist analysis.⁶³ As noted at various points in the chapter thus far, this project employs a focus on leadership due to the disproportionate influence yielded by Begin, Khomeini and Fahd on the foreign policies of Israel, Iran and Saudi Arabia, respectively, as well as the need for a project like this one to employ a narrow research focus in order to yield substantive findings. Whilst the Constructivist ontology allows for us to understand the role of religion, as an ideational factor, in foreign policy- the *how*

⁶⁰ Wendt, A. (1987) The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory. *International Organization*. 41 (3). p. 338.

⁶¹ Ibid. p. 385, 384-396.

⁶² Hurd, I. (2008) Constructivism. p. 306.

⁶³ Ibid. p. 305-6.

question - it does not necessarily provide the conceptual tools to explore the *why*; for this purpose FPA offers a valuable, complimentary approach.

Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA)

Like Constructivism, FPA stresses subjectivity, albeit with an overwhelming focus on individual agents acting alone or in groups. This has been the primary objective of FPA since its inception as an IR-subfield in the 1950s: to move beyond the notion of states as unitary, rational actors responding only to material, systemic forces - unpacking the “black-box”, as it were - to focusing on the decision makers constructing foreign policy and the array of explanans influencing them. IR has come a long way since the 1950s, and it is now widely acknowledged - implicitly or explicitly - across the discipline that we need to look beyond, below and across states to make sense of patterns in international politics. As Alden & Aran (2012) note, even Realism, in its neo-Classical variant, now deliberately integrates variables like perception, leadership, domestic structures that structural Realism steered far away from.⁶⁴ The proliferation of Constructivist scholarship following the USSR’s collapse in the 1990s has played no small part in this development and is for that reason the IR theory which, it is increasingly argued, is the most compatible with FPA.⁶⁵ Even with its flexibility regarding which unit of analysis to conduct a given analysis around, Constructivism, due to its focus on *social* meanings and structures, does not come close to fleshing out how those same constructs are experienced by the individual decision maker as a result of his or her belief system and, through his or her negotiations and decisions, are felt in the foreign policy of a state. As Tetlock (1998) points out, this dimension is necessary:

⁶⁴ Alden, C. & Aran, A. (2012) *Foreign Policy Analysis: New Approaches*. Oxon: Routledge. p. 117-118.

⁶⁵ See i.e. Houghton, D. P. (2007) Reinvigorating the Study of Foreign Policy Decision Making: Toward a Constructivist Approach. *Foreign Policy Analysis*. 3. p. 24-45 and Checkel, J. T. (2008) Constructivism and Foreign Policy. In Cox, M. and Stokes, D. (eds.) (2008) *US Foreign Policy*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press. p. 71-81.

If we seek explanations of why national decision makers do what they do, we will have to supplement the insights of macro theories [...] with micro assumptions about decision makers' cognitive representations of the policy environment, their goals in that environment, and their perceptions of the normative and domestic political constraints on policy options.⁶⁶

FPA has a wealth of analytical and conceptual tools to offer in this regard, especially its scholarship on Political Psychology. Three paradigmatic works laid the foundation for FPA in the 1950s and early 1960s, all of them emphasizing the need for an agent-specific approach to understanding foreign policy and foreign policy decision making. In *Decision-making as an Approach to the Study of International Politics* (1954), Snyder, Bruck & Sapin argued that, in order to make sense of foreign policy outcomes, one must first understand the operating environment as it is perceived by policy makers according to their ideas and values, amongst other factors, and they tasked scholars with reconstructing the world, as viewed through the eyes of decision makers. In a complementary study, *Man-Milieu Relationship Hypothesis in the Context of International Politics* (1956), Sprout & Sprout argued that foreign policy makers reach decisions based on their subjective "psychological environment" as it is that which shapes their perception of the "operational environment". In *Pre-theories and Theories of Foreign Policy* (1966), Rosenau emphasized the possibility of actor-specific theory of integrating various levels of analysis. Though developing as a critique of the dominant Realist theory, these works remained within a rationalist framework which assumed leaders to act to in a way which assumed national interests to be dictated by systemic and, especially, material forces.⁶⁷ Nonetheless, they stimulated what would become a much more

⁶⁶ Tetlock, P. E. (1998) Social Psychology and World Politics. In Gilbert, Daniel T.; Fiske, Susan T.; Lindzey, Gardner. *Handbook of Social Psychology*. 4th ed. Vol. 2. New York: McGraw-Hill. p. 876.

⁶⁷ Levy, J. (2003) Political Psychology and Foreign Policy. In Sears, David O.; Huddy, Leonie & Jervis, Robert (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 256.

nuanced research strand dedicated to understanding the psychological and societal milieux of foreign policy decision making.⁶⁸

The belief system of decision makers has received critical attention in FPA literature and has been found to influence perceptions in a way different from that propagated by rational choice models. It is elaborated upon here, as it has greatly inspired the research criteria around which the thesis' case studies have been organised (more on this further below, and in the thesis' conclusion). The main study of the importance of leaders' belief systems on their policies is by George (1969), who popularized the concept of "operational coding" developed first by Nathan Leites in *A Study of Bolshevism* (1953).⁶⁹ The latter discussed how Lenin's motivational biases (detailed below) and the cultural psychological and cultural milieu of revolutionary Russia comprised a particular set of conceptions - an "operational code" - according to which the Soviet elite developed its strategy. From this study, George noted that:

[...] beliefs and premises [serve] as a prism that influences the actor's perceptions and diagnoses of the flow of political events, his definitions and estimates of particular situations. These beliefs also provide norms, standards, and guidelines that influence the actor's choice of strategy and tactics, his structuring and weighing of alternative courses of action.⁷⁰

His re-examination of the operational code analysis suggests that a decision-maker's beliefs can be coded as a political belief system with a set of philosophical beliefs, such as "*What is the*

⁶⁸ Hudson, V. (2012) The History and Evolution of Foreign Policy Analysis. In Smith, S.; Hadfield, A. & Dunne, T. (eds.) *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*. 2nd ed. Oxford University Press. p. 13-23.

⁶⁹ George, A. (1969) The "Operational Code": A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making. *International Studies Quarterly*: 13 (2), p. 190-122.

⁷⁰ George, A. (1980) The "Operational Code": A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making. In Hoffman, E. P. & Fleron, F. J. (eds.) *The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy*: Second Edition. Hawthorne: Aldine de Gruyter. p. 166.

“essential“ nature of political life?” and “Is the political universe essentially one of harmony or conflict?” guiding the decision makers’ perception of a given situation. Equally, instrumental beliefs like “What is the best approach for selecting goals or objectives for political action?” and “What is the utility and role of different means for advancing one’s interests?” form part of the political belief system as a prescriptions for the best way of achieving philosophical goals.⁷¹ He posited that a set of ten standardized research questions, inspired by philosophical and instrumental beliefs, could serve as “a heuristic” for analyzing the perceptive prism of any individual; a sort of “instrumental rationality” model bounded by a system of beliefs.⁷² Due to his view (and he posits, that of Leites, too) that decision makers do not, mechanically draw on a set of “recipes or repertoires for political action”, operational coding approach should be considered in a more nuanced way than the term implies. One reason for this is that belief systems are subject to change, although the extent to which they change depends on the rigidity of the decision maker’s personality.⁷³ Operational code analysis has been applied widely following George’s study across a range of empirical contexts, with operational codes serving as both independent and dependent variables. Schafer & Crichlow (2000), for example, attribute shifts in US foreign policy with changes to Bill Clinton’s operational code and, as another example, Walker, Schafer & Narfleet (2001) correlated Jimmy Carter’s changing beliefs to the USSR invasion of Afghanistan, the Iranian hostage crisis and events Horn of Africa.⁷⁴ These studies, and others like them, propose that decision makers’ beliefs function as causal mechanisms in foreign policy decision making. They are supported by various insights from cognitive psychology which, taken together and separately, hold that policy makers, like all individuals, seek to process incoming information in ways that simplify representations of reality, and allow them to reason within their respective

⁷¹ Schafer, M. & Walker, S. (eds.) (2006) *Beliefs and Leadership in World Politics: Methods and Applications of Operational Code Analysis*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. p. 201, 205, 216.

⁷² Ibid. p. 7.

⁷³ George, A. (1969) The “Operational Code”: A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making. *International Studies Quarterly*. 13 (2), p. 190-122.

⁷⁴ Schafer, Mark & Walker, Stephen G. (2006). Introduction. In Schafer, Mark & Walker, Stephen G. (eds.) *Beliefs and Leadership in World Politics: Methods and Applications of Operational Code Analysis*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan. p. 9.

“bounded rationalities.” The concept of “unmotivated bias”, for example, holds that, through a belief system, a set of cognitive dispositions is generated that shapes how an individual processes incoming information making him or her responsive only, or primarily, to information that is consistent with existing beliefs. In events where incoming information is overwhelmingly complex, or poses a challenge to existing beliefs, decision makers, through “motivated biases”, actively cling to their existing belief system as a result of their psychological need to avoid negative emotions such as fear and stress, and their desire to reduce cognitive dissonance.⁷⁵ Moreover, policy makers are prone to draw on historical analogies, metaphors and extrapolations, selected consciously or subconsciously to support or confirm their existing beliefs. These reference points help to frame incoming information in a way which, rightly or wrongly, offers direction and a course of action for the decision-maker.⁷⁶ While beliefs are not thought to be completely unchangeable, cognitive mechanisms like unmotivated biases and historical analogies strongly add to the perseverance of existing beliefs.⁷⁷ Together, the premises of FPA outlined thus far alert us to the importance of the individual decision maker’s psychological environment, or belief system, in influencing his perceptions of the operational environment and, ultimately, his foreign policy decision making. Collectively, they have inspired, especially, the formulation of the case studies’ first research criterion to “*Understand how the leader’s religious beliefs form part of his worldview.*” What exactly comprises the leaders’ religious beliefs and world-views, and how that reflects in their foreign policies, is detailed in the respective case studies, and discussed further in the thesis’ conclusion.

Jervis (1976) combines this array of cognitive insights to show that the beliefs of decision makers serve as the basis on which they perceive - or misperceive - the “operational environment”. His

⁷⁵ Levy, J. (2003) Political Psychology and Foreign Policy. In Sears, David O.; Huddy, Leonie & Jervis, Robert (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 264-68.

⁷⁶ Jervis, R. (1976) *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. p. 13.

⁷⁷ Levy, J. (2003) *Political Psychology and Foreign Policy*: p. 267.

study, and insights from social and cognitive psychology regarding beliefs in general, are important because they allow us to address the “why” question. As Richard Snyder stated in the early days of FPA:

If one wishes to probe the “why” questions underlying the events, conditions, and interaction patterns which rest upon state action, then decision-making analysis is certainly necessary. We would go so far as to say that the “why” questions cannot be answered without analysis of decision making.⁷⁸

The “why” question is interesting, if crucial, for this project and others like it, that seeks to go beyond speculating about the role of ideas in foreign policy, to identifying the sources of those ideas.⁷⁹ As Tetlock (1998) notes “social psychology explores the thoughts, feelings, and actions of human beings.”⁸⁰ These insights are not enough in and of themselves, however, as it remains problematic to generalize from the individual-level to the international one. This issue opens a broader question about the ontological compatibility between the cognitive branch of FPA and Constructivism; specifically, whether FPA’s focus on *individual* agency as it exists largely unrelated to social structures, and Constructivism’s focus on *intersubjective* ideas as well as a *co-constitutive* agency-structure nature can be combined in a single research agenda. A synthesis between the two should not be taken for granted; nonetheless, there is an implicit or explicit acknowledgement in some of FPA’s seminal works about how perceptions, ideas or beliefs of the individual decision maker are necessarily produced through interaction with the social, which indicate that a fruitful conversation between nominally agent-centric FPA and social Constructivism is indeed possible.

⁷⁸ Snyder, R.; Bruck, H. W. & Sapin, B. (1962) *Foreign Policy Decision Making*. p. 33.

⁷⁹ Levy, J. (2003) *Political Psychology and Foreign Policy*. p. 273; Jervis, R. (1994/95) Review of Goldstein, J. and Keohane, R. (1993) *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*. *Political Science Quarterly*. 109 (5). p. 907-909.

⁸⁰ Tetlock, P. E. (1998) Social Psychology and World Politics. In Gilbert, Daniel T.; Fiske, Susan T.; Lindzey, Gardner. *Handbook of Social Psychology*. 4th edition. Vol. 2. New York: McGraw-Hill. p. 868.

Rivera's *The Psychological Dimension of Foreign Policy* (1968), for example, notes that the individual's beliefs are necessarily anchored in a larger reference group and what that group perceives as being real. Similarly, Janis' *Group Think* (1971) argues that social reality is collectively constructed in that group dynamics are found to influence decision making.⁸¹ Allison makes a similar argument in his *Essence of Decision* (1971) where he shows that bureaucratic structures influence, if impede, governmental decision making in a crisis situation. Leites (1953), too, in his study of Bolshevism, looked to the norms from the cultural milieu of the intelligentsia and revolutionary underground in Russia at the turn of the 20th century, to understand biases in Lenin's personality.⁸² Altogether, these works indicate that FPA indeed provides a terrain on which to include the social, albeit with a heavier focus on the individual and more in terms of the domestic than the systemic, thus making way for an FPA-Constructivist synthesis. This is even more so if we broaden our view of FPA beyond its cognitive research strand, where it becomes clear that the belief systems of decision makers are not the only sources influencing foreign policy. In democratic states, influences emanate from domestic public opinion, bureaucratic politics, small and large group dynamics within which decision makers work and the media.⁸³ Even autocrats like Saddam Hussein do not act independently, but depend on complex bureaucratic structures for the "successful" running of their state.⁸⁴

Epistemologically, too, Constructivism and FPA have differentiable positions, as observed above, in that the former is interpretivist in its aim to *understand*, and the latter is objectivist in its aim to *explain*. But neither approach is so rigidly unified as to be unable to accommodate one another. While there are certainly Constructivist scholars, like Wendt, who employ positivist epistemologies

⁸¹ Houghton, D. P. (2007) Reinvigorating the Study of Foreign Policy Decision Making: Toward a Constructivist Approach. *Foreign Policy Analysis*. 3 (1). p. 30-5.

⁸² Schafer, M. & Walker, S. (eds.) (2006) *Beliefs and Leadership in World Politics: Methods and Applications of Operational Code Analysis*. p. 7.

⁸³ Alden, C. and Aran, A. (2012) *Foreign Policy Analysis: New Approaches*, p. 31-45, 46-61.

⁸⁴ Hill, C. (2003) *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*. Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan. p. 72.

aimed at understanding, others like Onuf, aim towards explaining. FPA scholars are similarly disunited: despite its behaviouralist origins which favoured scientific study of human decision making whereby ideas were treated as causal, rather than constitutive, their epistemological identity is now largely eclectic.⁸⁵ In sum, constructivism and FPA are sufficiently flexible for some of their strands to synthesize in analysis; yet sufficiently different so that they both bring value and neither can be discarded for this project. Specifically, that means that Constructivism offers an understanding of how the social world shapes the decision maker's conception of religion, and FPA an explanation of how the individual decision maker feeds in turn feeds that perception into foreign policy decision making. A synthesis between post-positivist Constructivism and FPA, like the one adopted by this project and encouraged by scholars like Houghton (2007), is thus not only possible but indeed conducive to the type of full analysis that would do justice to researching religion's role in foreign policy.

1.4 Structure of thesis

I develop the thesis' argument over five chapters, followed by a discussion and conclusion. I start by developing a definition of religion (chapter 2), based on the perceived need for a nuanced, yet substantive understanding of religion, as opposed to functionalist ("religion is what religion does") or essentialist ones, which - I show - are flawed due to their respective focus on religion's *effects* only, and disregard of important nuances within so-called "world-religions." Based on a cumulative analysis that draws on insights from Religious Studies, Theology, Sociology and not least the post-secular IR debate, I develop a definition of religion which understands the latter to comprise an interplay between an individual's "faith" and the interpretive tradition of the "belief-community" to which that individual belongs; I term this "religious beliefs;" a term that I moreover employ throughout the thesis. Apart from overcoming the drawbacks of functionalist and essentialist

⁸⁵ Houghton, D. P. (2007) *Reinvigorating the Study of Foreign Policy Decision Making: Toward a Constructivist Approach*. p. 27-9.

understandings of religion, this definition moves beyond IR's conventional understanding of religion as "a set of privatized beliefs" that hitherto has done little to understand the role of religion in an international relations context, if not added to the *mis*understanding of it. Before applying this definition to case studies on Begin's Israel, Khomeini's Iran and Fahd's Saudi Arabia, I "set the scene" (chapter 3) for the thesis' empirical part by providing an overview of the Middle East region's socio-political climate during the period following the 1967 Arab-Israeli war until, roughly, the early 1990s when the Second Gulf war ended, showing that a decisive increase in religiosity and well as religious discourse and behaviour on the part of political leaders and movements took place. I show that, in Israel, the Jewish state's decisive victory in the 1967 war prompted the establishment of a so-called "settler movement" comprised of several groups that called for Israeli sovereignty over territories captured during the war, and did so overwhelmingly, though not exclusively, on religious grounds; a sentiment that in turn was a decisive contributor to the political success of Menachem Begin's Likud party and indeed facilitated the religious-nationalist government that he formed following the 1977, and 1981, Israeli elections. I show that, in Iran, the Islamic Revolution of 1979 and the establishment of the Islamic Republic which resulted from it, succeeded a period of intense anti-Westernism in the country that went hand-in-hand with an ardent religious fervour; one that would furthermore persist throughout most of Iran's war with neighboring Iraq and intensify following Khomeini's death-threatening *fatwa* against the British novelist, Salman Rushdie. I finally show that in Saudi Arabia, religious ideologies flourished along with religious practice in the already religiously conservative Kingdom, following an attack of religious extremists on Mecca's Grand Mosque in 1979; a sentiment that was only intensified by Khomeini's religious discourse emanating across the Persian Gulf and, even more so, following the commencement of the second Gulf war when foreign, "infidel troops" were stationed in the Kingdom. In the chapter, I furthermore show that Begin, Khomeini and Fahd, apart from operating within these religiously charged environments, operated within decision making structures that gave

them a large degree of autonomy as far as foreign policy is concerned. I include this section, not because the thesis focuses strictly on the decision making of those leaders, but to “justify” the thesis assessing the foreign policies of Israel, Iran and Saudi Arabia throughout the prism of the leadership of Begin, Khomeini and Fahd.

In the first of the thesis’ case studies (chapter 4), *Religion and Foreign Policy in Israel under Menachem Begin (1977-84)*, I argue that Begin’s religious beliefs shape his worldview in no insignificant way, as well as his foreign policy doctrine and, by extension, also his foreign policy vis-a-vis the Camp David Accords and Operation Peace for Galilee. Specifically, I show that Begin’s religious beliefs - comprised by his individual “faith” and its interplay with the neo-revisionist “belief-community” (the latter not strictly religious, as the chapter will discuss) - reflected in his ardent insistence on Israeli sovereignty over Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip in the context of the Camp David Accords and also, albeit indirectly, in his militant insistence to destroy the PLO in the context of Operation Peace for Galilee. I additionally argue, based on a range of primary materials that, by employing religious references in his public discourse, Begin legitimized - whether to himself or his domestic constituencies - his foreign policies, especially given that he invoked such discourse during times of domestic discontent. Despite the observation that such discourse was somewhat contradictory, I discuss that his religious discourse was nonetheless very possibly a genuine reflection of his religious beliefs.

In the second of the thesis’ case studies (chapter 5), *Religion and Foreign Policy in Iran under Ayatollah Khomeini (1979-89)*, I make a similar argument; that Khomeini’s religious beliefs - the outcome of his individual “faith” and its interplay with the interpretive tradition of the Twelver Shi’a “belief-community” to which he belonged - profoundly shaped his worldview and by extension also a foreign policy doctrine which was premised on consolidating the Islamic Republic

and spreading the Islamic Revolution; a doctrine that, in turn, reflected in his continuation of the Iran-Iraq war past Iran's nominal victory in 1982, as well as in his death threatening *fatwa* against British novelist, Salman Rushdie. I moreover argue, and show, that Khomeini legitimized himself and his foreign policies with reference to religious discourse, invoking themes of *jihad* and martyrdom specific to, especially, the Shi'a interpretive tradition of Islam. Whilst such discourse carried contradictory messages and indeed prescribed contradictory actions vis-a-vis foreign policy, I argue that such discrepancies can be explained with reference to Islamic concepts like *maslahat* (expediency) and *ijtihad* (right to interpretation), and thus represent a development of Khomeini's religious beliefs, rather than a departure from them.

In the thesis' third and final case study (chapter 6), *Religion and Foreign Policy in Saudi Arabia under Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (1975-1992)*, I argue that the Wahhabi "belief-community" to which Fahd belonged comprised an important part of his worldview, though less as a result of his individual "faith," than of the historic religio-political agreement forged between eighteenth century leaders of the Saud dynasty and Wahhab tribe, which Fahd, as a leading royal figure, necessarily had an interest in living by. This aspect of Fahd's world-view interplayed with another important component which, for Fahd as a Royalist, demanded equal interest, namely a strong alliance with the US, whose expertise and support in defense and military matters, the Kingdom depended for its material security. Fahd's worldview translated, roughly, into a foreign policy doctrine that aimed to maintain a strong US-Saudi Arabian alliance as well as a leadership role in inter-Arab affairs, particularly in matters with a Islamic dimension; a doctrine that furthermore reflected in Fahd's foreign policy vis-a-vis the Camp David Accords and Operation Desert Storm and the Gulf War that succeeded it. On this basis, I argue that Fahd's foreign policy cannot be understood without reference to religion, though the connection between his individual "faith" and foreign policy is far from as direct as in the cases of Begin and, especially, Khomeini. But like those leaders, Fahd

employed religious discourse to legitimize himself and his foreign policies and, doing so, reinforced his identity as an Islamic leader of an Islamic Arab Kingdom. On this basis, I argue that religion constrained Fahd from pursuing his preferred moderate foreign policy vis-a-vis the Camp David Accords, and delegitimized him in the eyes of religious extremists when he invited “infidel” troops into the Kingdom in the context of Operation Desert Shield.

The thesis’ conclusion (chapter 7) discusses the abovementioned case-study findings and outlines avenues for future research.

CHAPTER 2

THINKING ABOUT RELIGION: KEY DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS

*In a higher world it is otherwise, but here below to live is to change, and to
be perfect is to have changed often.*

- John Henry Cardinal Newman⁸⁶

2.0 Introduction

The opening quote by Newman is excerpted from his illustrious work *The Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845) where it forms part of a larger argument that interpretation of doctrine is necessarily shaped by the contemporary socio-political milieu but can be so without breaking with its fundamental principles. Newman wrote in the early 1840s under decidedly European and Catholic⁸⁷ conditions; his argument, however, applies far beyond that immediate context. Indeed, it foreruns IR's post-secular debate in which scholars unanimously dismiss the essentialization of (any) doctrine and, to varying degrees, suggest that religion's role must be thought about in the context of other factors; an ontology that, in turn, has conceptual and methodological implications for the study of religion in IR. As such, Newman's quote sets the scene for exploration of the theme of this chapter which comprises the conceptualization of religion.

The chapter opens with a detailed discussion about definitional issues as they pertain to religion; a discussion that is enriched by insight from Religious Studies, Theology, Sociology and not least the post-secular IR debate, and which, in turn, is rendered complex by those same insights. It firstly examines IR's conventional definition of religion as a privately held set of beliefs separate from the

⁸⁶ Newman, J. H. C. (1960) *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*. 2nd edition. New York: Image Books. p. 63.

⁸⁷ Newman wrote *On The Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845) during his period of reflections on transitioning from Anglican to Catholic priesthood. He converted to Catholicism in 1845, in the same year that *On the Development of Christian Doctrine* was published and, although Protestant while producing the manuscript, Newman's work is widely thought to be one written from a Catholic perspective.

realm of politics, derived from the discipline's reading of international relations in the post-Westphalian order. It does so with a view to show that such a Western-centric reading, apart from being at fault for perpetrating scholarly biases, is unsuited to approaching the study of religion as it pertains to a context other than that of seventeenth century Europe, and particularly one that is non-Western. Attempting to understand the role of religion, like this project does, in Middle Eastern societies and their politics through a prism which holds that phenomenon to be a set of privatized beliefs would, then, be thoroughly off the mark.

The chapter goes on to show that a comprehensive understanding of religion, attempted by various scholars (discussed below) as an effort to overcome narrow and politicized definitions, is problematic for the opposite reasons. While its generality largely, albeit not entirely, mitigates issues pertaining to Eurocentrism, the definition it derives is necessarily too vague to serve as a useful analytical tool, to the extent that it encompasses phenomena like nationalism or Nazism that are, despite their overlapping elements and histories with religion, distinct ones (though not necessarily ones that should be *studied* differently). Other efforts to develop separate substantive definitions of each world religion, conversely, prove themselves to be intellectually implausible, in part, because they do not account for, sometimes contradictory, nuances within religious doctrines despite their substantive approach, and, partly, because they are too rigid to capture the doctrinal changes which occur in line with contextual ones. Finally, functionalist approaches which do not approach the study of religion by way of any particular conceptualization, but rather examine its *effects* in isolated contexts, while applaudable insofar as they largely mitigate the drawbacks of Eurocentrism, essentialism and generality, in solely taking religion to mean as its effects suggest, does not advance the scholarly study of religion in a substantive way to the extent that this project seeks to do.

Informed by this cumulative analysis and inspired particularly by Sheikh (2012), the chapter arrives at a conceptualization of religion whereby the latter is taken to be a phenomenon which can be studied substantively with reference to, not an overarching religious doctrine, like Islam, but a community of believers within a specific doctrine, such as, Twelver Shi'ism. I term this "community-religion." Agents within belief communities are furthermore thought to hold individual understandings, based on factors like their upbringing and education, of what their community-religion pre- and pro-scribes in terms of beliefs and/or action. I term the personal, religious experience, "faith". I use "religious doctrine" to refer to what is usually understood as world religions, such as Judaism, Christianity or Islam in the most general sense. Inspired largely by Newman's work described above, I moreover conceive of community-religion, faith and religious doctrine as fluid constructs, but ones that, nonetheless, retain certain fundamental elements, facilitating a substantive study. With these distinguishable definitions of terms, the project thus overcomes, insofar as it is possible, understandings of religion that are inadequate for the study of that phenomenon in IR due to being Euro-centric or essentialist, on one extreme, and generalist or functionalist, on the other.

Equally importantly, it provides an ontology within which the theoretical framework outlined in the previous chapter was devised. Constructivism, with its focus on intersubjective processes in the formation of ideas, as well as the interplay between agency and structure, in many ways complements various of the dimensions unveiled during the cumulative analysis of religion. Specifically, it allows us to understand intersubjective ideas about beliefs and/or practices, as they pertain to, and are shaped by, belief communities. Moreover, with regards to foreign policy outcomes, it offers an intellectual ground on which to explore the interplay between said ideas and contextual factors which, as Newman and indeed the title of his seminal work alludes to, hold great importance for the development of doctrine. For a project like this one, which takes three foreign

policy leaders as its main variable of study, Constructivism nonetheless falls short of offering a full range of analytical tools. Specifically, its focus on shared ideas forego a focus' on the individual decision maker. Here, FPA offers a complementary set of analytical tools as it, like Constructivism, focuses on social processes, but does so with a focus on human decision making, including the psychological environment, personality characteristics and cognitive biases of individuals, all of which are avenues in which personal faith figures. Although not without its ontological and epistemological discords, as outlined in the previous chapter, a synthesis between Constructivism and FPA thus offers a range of tools with which to conduct a full analysis.

2.1 Defining religion

Moving beyond the Westphalian understanding of religion

The intricacies involved in defining religion and the implications that arise from the way its “resurgence” on the political scene and in international relations is discussed has received due attention in IR’s post-secular debate. With the exception of some initial contributions (discussed below), that debate is geared toward ridding IR of the idea, which has hitherto dominated in its scholarship, that religion exists, or ought to, as a doctrine of ideas in a realm separate from that of politics. This idea has long been rejected, if it was ever entertained, in disciplines like Religious Studies, Theology, Philosophy, Middle East Studies and, to a lesser extent, Sociology,⁸⁸ but has generally been part of the vernacular in IR. It is so, as a result of the authority that the Treaties of Westphalia, which famously implemented the *cuius regio, eius religio* (whose realm, his religion) principle, holds in the discipline as a prerequisite for the development of the modern world order as

⁸⁸ Secularization theory, which holds that societies will secularize as they modernize, was dominant in Sociology for much of the latter half of the twentieth century. One of its hitherto most vocal proponents, Peter Berger (1996), has since admitted that secularization theory was “essentially mistaken”, and cited a comprehensive range of empirical events, from Vatican II to Islamic and Evangelical revivals worldwide, as the source of his new perspective that the world is, in fact, de-secularizing (Berger, P. (1996) *Secularism in Retreat. The National Interest*. 46. p. 3.)

it emerged in seventeenth century Europe and, subsequently, around the world.⁸⁹ By and large, IR's interpretation of the Westphalian principle has, along with Enlightenment writings and the secularization thesis that have informed the discipline, taken religion to be a set of beliefs that are privately held and practiced.⁹⁰

In the context of the post-secular debate, this dominant interpretation has been challenged by Petite & Hatzopoulos who adopt bold statements like “religion was the object that needed to vanish for modern international politics to come into being”⁹¹ in the edited volume of the equally bold title *Religion in International Relations: The Return from Exile* (2003). Or, like Philpott's assertion in his article *The Challenge of September 11 to Secularism in International Relations* (2002), that the “[Westphalian synthesis] was shaken [by] a figure whose identity is public religion - religion that is

⁸⁹ There are notable exceptions to this understanding; scholarship exists which challenges the claim of Westphalia as the progenitor of modern nation-state sovereignty. Buzan & Little (2000), for example, point out that city-states with sovereign principles existed prior to the signing of the Westphalian Treaties (Buzan, B. & Little, R. (2000) *International Systems in World History: Remaking the Study of International Relations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 167-188.), as does the perhaps most obstinate critic of the conventional understanding of Westphalia's significance, Krasner, who additionally highlights that aspects of medieval Europe persisted after the Treaties' signing (Krasner, S. D. (1993) Westphalia and All That. In Goldstein, J. & Keohane, R. (eds.) (1993) *Ideas and foreign policy: beliefs, institutions and political change*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. p. 235-264.) Krasner's critique is merited to an extent, according to Farr (2005) who acknowledges that the papacy and feudal aristocracy that had hitherto enjoyed ecclesiastical and political hegemony still retained some power after the Treaties' signing (Farr, J. (2005) Point: The Westphalia Legacy and the Modern Nation-State. *International Social Science Review*, 2005, Vol. 80 (3/4), p. 156.); and to Philpott, who outlines how monarchs in Britain, France and Sweden gained supremacy over the church and territorial rivals from the 14th to mid 17th century (so, surpassing the date of the Peace Treaties) (Philpott, Daniel (2000) The Religious Roots of Modern International Relations. *World Politics*. 52. p. 210-1). Even in light of such discrepancies that challenge the commonly held view of the Westphalian Peace as marking the origin of the modern system of international relations, both Farr and Philpott agree that the conventional understanding withstands a large part of its criticism. To Farr (2005: 159) “[...] the Peace of Westphalia remains the foundation of modern international relations”, and to Philpott (2005: 208-13) the signing of the Treaties, at the very least, marks the consolidation of the modern international system.” Prior to the Treaties of Westphalia being signed, medieval Europe was characterised by religious wars wrought by the Protestant Reformation that manifested as a result of growing public discontent with the ruling Catholic Church. Until the reformation's outbreak in 1517, (to a large extent also under its duration and to a smaller extent, after), the Holy Roman Empire had substantial powers that enforced religious uniformity. The Westphalian Treaties did not explicitly deny religion a role in the state system; however, religion's exclusion from politics was largely facilitated by their inclusion of the principle that no institution above the state would henceforth be entrusted with the authority to interfere in religious matters, as well as by the principle of non-interference into religious matters between states. Additionally, as it was the case with the sovereignty principle, medieval European warfare changed character following signing of the treaties (Philpott, D. (2000), *The Religious Roots of Modern International Relations*, p. 208-240). This is not to say that religious wars did not occur after Westphalia; however, European warfare would never again be characterised by the intervention for religion to the extent that it was before 1648 (Holsti, K. J. (2004) *Taming the Sovereigns: Institutional Change in International Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 124.) and the secular principle of *raison d'état* replaced religion as the main driver of foreign policy (Thomas, S. M. (2005) *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. p. 55.)

⁹⁰ See e.g. Keohane, R. O. (2002) The Globalization of Informal Violence, Theories of World Politics, and “Liberalism of Fear”. *Dialogue IO*. 1 (1). p. 29; Fox, J. (2009) Integrating Religion into International Relations Theory. In Haynes, J. (ed.) *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics*. Oxon and New York: Routledge. p. 288; Philpott, D. (2002) The Challenge of September 11 to Secularism in International Relations. *World Politics*. 55 (1). p. 66-95. All of these are discussed in detail in chapter 1.

⁹¹ Petite, F. and Hatzopoulos, P. (eds.) (2003) *Religion in International Relations: The Return from Exile*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan. p. 1.

not privatized within the cocoon of the individual or the family but that dares to refashion secular politics and culture.”⁹² Such statements have admittedly helped to shed light on a previously ignored aspect of IR which, as highlighted in the previous chapter, is increasingly necessary in order to understand international relations. However, by framing religion in terms of its “return” and invoking a binary of “public” versus “privatized”, the abovementioned scholars are, although giving unprecedented and warranted importance to religion, reproducing the categories with which IR has hitherto used to treat that phenomenon, namely as a realm distinct from that of politics. Insofar as the purpose of the post-secular turn in IR should be to move beyond merely bemoaning the discipline’s disregard for religion, as critics like Bellin (2008) have commendably pointed out, such efforts do not move us toward a better understanding of what religion is and how to approach the study of it, in the context of international relations.⁹³

A first step towards overcoming this binary is to show that religion is conceivable as a fluid construct whose meaning waxes and wanes over time and, importantly, can come to be perceived as “fixed” by the authority which defines it. For example, Christianity in seventeenth century Europe compared to contemporary European understandings of it, has changed drastically. Not in the simplistic sense that religion was removed from the public sphere and relegated to the private one. But in the more profound sense that it has changed from being a thoroughly social phenomenon, which defined a community of believers; to a body of beliefs held privately by the individual believer. This means that the European wars of religion were not primarily about clashes over doctrinal disputes which, once removed from public life, were resolved; they were in defense of communities defined by a social religion.⁹⁴ This re-modeling of Christianity was instigated by newly emerging European states that, following the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia, worked to

⁹² Philpott, D. (2002) The Challenge of September 11 to Secularism in International Relations. *World Politics*. 55 (1). p. 67.

⁹³ Bellin, E. (2012) Faith in Politics. New Trends in the Study of Religion and Politics. *World Politics*. 60 (2). p. 338-9.

⁹⁴ Thomas, S. M. (2000) Taking Religious and Cultural Pluralism Seriously: The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Society. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*. 29 (3). p. 815-841.

transfer citizens' loyalty from ecclesial powers to state ones. In this sense, the idea of religion as a set of privately held doctrines or beliefs was, as Thomas (2000) argues, an "invention" necessary for the modern international order to emerge, made possible both due to Christianity's malleability, or what state leaders perceived as such, as well as political leadership.⁹⁵

The notion that religion is a fluid concept whose meaning is maneuvered by the powers that be (or want to be) is driven home by the etymology of *religion*. The meaning of religion or its classical latin precursor, *religio*, has changed significantly from its inception in the pre-Christian era. At that time, Cicero linked *religio* to the latin verb *relegere* - to re-trace - and *religio* came to refer to retracing the rituals of one's ancestors; a verb largely synonymous with *traditio*. While a multitude of traditions in the, then, pagan Roman empire, were accepted as part of *religio*, early Christians were considered atheists as their *traditio* was unrecognizable. This changed, however, as Christian power grew in the Roman Empire; Christian discourse sought to divorce the meaning of *religio* from that of *traditio*, and the early Christian writer Lucius Lactantius, arguing against Cicero's etymology, linked *religio* to the verb *religare* - to bind together. Through the writings of Marsilio Ficino in the fifteenth century, *religio* came to connote a bond between one God and man, until it, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries became associated with a set of propositions just as it, importantly, took a plural form, denoting that there was more than one *religio*.⁹⁶ Similarly, the understanding of religion as a set of individual beliefs started emerging in the late fifteenth century when the meaning of the latin term *religio* changed from a set of practices embedded in the ecclesial community, to various virtues supported by practices of the ecclesial community. Further ahead, in the early sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, *religio* came to refer to a system of beliefs that could exist independently from the ecclesial communities; a meaning that was consolidated by

⁹⁵ Ibid. p. 816.

⁹⁶ Hurd, E. S. (2011) Secularism and International Relations Theory. In: Snyder, J. (ed.) *Religion and International Relations Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press. p. 72-3.

i.e. Hugo Grotius' *De Veritate Religionis Christianae* (1622) and William Chillingworth's *The Religion of Protestants* (1637), which promoted thinking about what the Christian religion taught, rather than what it simply was.⁹⁷

As the etymology of religion shows, and though often done in the post-secular debate and beyond, divorcing a given understanding of religion from the context in which it has been defined and the authorities - political and scholarly alike - who define it, is an unviable intellectual endeavor. Moreover, it is one that threatens produce, or reproduce, scholarly biases which insinuate Western superiority in cultural and developmental terms. From an Orientalist perspective, using the terms like "resurgence of religion" to describe instances where religion features "socially", as Islam often does implicitly suggests, as Bosco (2002) argues, that Islam's *present* is akin to Christianity's *past* from which liberalism and secularism has offered an escape.⁹⁸ Such statements are detectable even in scholarship whose authors are alert to the inherent politicization of defining religion: for example, Thomas (2000), whose argument that religion as a private set of doctrinal beliefs was "invented" by political authorities to usher in the liberal world order, writes that:

We risk misunderstanding the global resurgence of religion if we apply a modern concept of religion to non-Western societies where this transition is incomplete, or where it is being resisted as part of their struggle for authenticity and development. If the global resurgence of religion and cultural pluralism are to be taken seriously, then a social understanding of religion and its importance to the authenticity and development of

⁹⁷ Thomas, S. M. (2000), Taking Religious and Cultural Pluralism Seriously: The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Society, p. 819-23. For an early enquiry into the etymology of religion, see i.e. Hoyt, Sarah F. (1912) The Etymology of Religion. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*: 32 (2). 129-139.

⁹⁸ Bosco, R. M. (2009) Persistent Orientalisms: the concept of religion in international relations. *Journal of International Relations and Development*. 12. p. 92.

communities and states should be recognised as part of any post-Westphalian international order.⁹⁹

Thomas writes, plausibly, that applying our modern concept of religion to understanding how the latter operates in non-Western societies will not adequately capture “religion” as it manifests in its “social” form. But by depicting the “transition” from “social” to “modern” as one that is incomplete, as though inherently desirable, Thomas wanders straight into the Orientalist waters that Bosco warns against. As noted in the previous chapter, Hurd (2011) has observed that, in a Christian context, the “religious” and “secular” cannot readily be separated because the so-called secular age of Enlightenment is in many, significant ways a continuation of Christian Europe under the Holy Roman Empire;¹⁰⁰ Barnett (2011) makes a similar argument by arguing that Christianity was part and parcel of European expansionism from the sixteenth century and beyond and is evidenced in many contemporary human rights documents.¹⁰¹ As such, any attempt to define religion within the religious-secular binary is, as Hurd points out, inevitably a political move because by defining the “secular” (as “rational”, for example) one defines the “religious” to mean the opposite (“irrational”, in this case).¹⁰² So is the case if we, like Thomas, have one definition for religion in the “modern” Western sense and another for religion in its “social” non-Western sense.

⁹⁹ Thomas, S. M. (2000) *Taking Religious and Cultural Pluralism Seriously: The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Society*. p. 816.

¹⁰⁰ Hurd, E. S. (2011) *Secularism and International Relations Theory*. p. 72-3.

¹⁰¹ Barnett, M. N. (2011) Another Great Awakening? International Relations Theory and Religion. In: Snyder, J. (ed.) *Religion and International Relations Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press. p. 91-115.

¹⁰² Hurd, E. S. (2011) *Secularism and International Relations Theory*. p. 63.

Toward a comprehensive understanding of religion

The politicized implications of employing different categories of “religion” raise the question of whether a comprehensive definition of religion may be developed, and applied, that mitigates any implicit or explicit biases while, at the same time, provides a substantive tool with which to approach the study of religion. Various scholars have made attempts to do so. Haynes (2014), for example, writes that religion comprises the features of *transcendence* (relating to supernatural realities), *sacredness* (a system of language and practice that organizes the world in terms of what is deemed holy, and *ultimacy* (relating people to the ultimate conditions of existence.)¹⁰³ Along similar lines, Horowitz (2009) defines religion as “a set of beliefs generally regarding the supernatural and involving practices designed to explain and justify existence”, to which he adds that such a definition “[...] may be most useful when discussing the major Abrahamic religions.”¹⁰⁴ Similarly, but in a more detailed way, Shah, Stephan & Toft (2012) write that most definitions of religion includes one or all of the following elements:

A belief in a supernatural being (or beings); prayers and communication with that being; transcendent realities that might include some form of heaven, paradise or hell; a distinction between the sacred and the profane and between ritual acts and sacred objects; a view that explains the world as a whole and a person’s role in it; behaviour and a prescribed moral conduct in line with that worldview;

¹⁰³ Haynes, J. (2014) Religion. In: Burnell, P.; Rakner, L.; Randall, V. *Politics in the Developing World*. Fourth edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. 121.

¹⁰⁴ Horowitz, M. C. (2009) Long Time Going: Religion and the Duration of Crusading. *International Security*: 34 (2). p. 167.

and a group of people bound to one another on the basis of these elements.¹⁰⁵

The definitions of religion listed here move beyond the restricted and politicized conception of religion as a set of individual doctrines, that we saw above, but they are problematic in other ways. Firstly, Horowitz and Shah, Stephan & Toft's reference to "a set of beliefs" or "a belief", even if accompanied by other facets, implies, as Horowitz himself points out, a bias towards the Abrahamic religions, leaving out or, worse, making inadequate assumptions about religions in which "beliefs" do not feature. An example that is often brought up in this context is Buddhism which, as is well-known in disciplines like Religious Studies and Theology, is not centered around beliefs, if the latter feature at all. As Batchelor (1997) explains, Buddhism is focused on action rather than belief. At Buddhism's core are the Four Noble Truths, which all relate to *Dukkha* (anguish) and how to overcome it. Respectively, the Four Noble Truths hold that *Dukkha* is an inevitable part of life; that it originates from man's desire; that man can overcome it by detaching himself from desire; and, that true enlightenment occurs when man has detached himself from such desires. These Truths, Batchelor notes, are to be lived out in a particular way: anguish is to be understood, its origins be let go of, its cessation be realized and the path of life to be cultivated. Crucially, *living out* the Four Noble Truths is different from *believing* them to be propositions of fact.¹⁰⁶ This is perhaps nowhere better clarified in Gautama Buddha's celebrated utterance: "I teach suffering, its origin, cessation and path. That's all I teach".¹⁰⁷ Related, Armstrong (2001) explains that the notion of a supernatural God was refused by the Buddha who insisted that even the Fourth Truth of Nirvana was not exclusive to him or any Supreme Being, but rather natural to humanity¹⁰⁸ Armstrong's analysis thus

¹⁰⁵ Shah, T. S., Stephan, A. Toft, (2012) *Rethinking Religion and World Affairs*. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 133.

¹⁰⁶ Batchelor, S. (1997) *Buddhism Without Beliefs: A Contemporary Guide to Awakening*. New York: Riverhead Books. p. 4-5.

¹⁰⁷ BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION (2009) The Four Noble Truths. [Online] Available from: http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/buddhism/beliefs/fournobletruths_1.shtml Accessed: 1 February, 2014.

¹⁰⁸ Armstrong, K. (2001) *Buddha*. London: Orion Books Ltd., p. 7.

alerts us to another strain between Buddhism and the definitions put forward by Horowitz and Shah, Stephan & Toft, both of which link “belief(s)” to the “supernatural”.

What is more, the terminology used by Haynes, Horowitz and, especially, Shah, Stephan & Toft is so general that it could, unwittingly, define phenomena partly or entirely separate from religion. Various scholars have shown how political ideology can take a “religious-like” form. Lausten & Wæver (2000), for example, show with reference to Nazism in the Third Reich, how Hitler’s socialist nationalism was presented as a religion through the use of religious semantics and signifiers. Drawing on Christian roots of the Germanic tradition, they show that reference points were used whereby *Mein Kampf* (My Fight) became the Biblical Scriptures; *Der Fuhrer* (Der Master), God’s messenger; *Swastika*, the cross of Jesus; *Reichspareigelande* (Nazi Party Day area),¹⁰⁹ the Church; holy days of Christianity, holy days of Nazism; and, preachers of the *Reich* (regime), preachers of the Church. Importantly, for socialist nationalism’s success, a parallel to the Biblical narrative was constructed around these reference points: like Adam and Eve had no choice but to leave Paradise, Germany was forced to watch the Aryan kingdom disappear; like God’s law was revealed to Moses and Jews elected the chosen people, so Hitler was the prophet to proliferate the law of race; like Christians struggled against their fallen nature, so the Aryans fought against other races; like Christians’ conduct on Earth determined whether they go to heaven or hell on Judgement Day, so the Aryans’ survival or extinction depended on whether they fulfill their mission of ensuring an unmixed race.¹¹⁰

Another phenomenon that arguably fits abovementioned definitions of religion, is liberalism of the

twenty-first century. Drawing on the work of Charles Taylor and Craig Calhoun, Barnett (2011)

¹⁰⁹ *Reichspareigelande* refers to the area in which the Third Reich’s Nazi party held celebrations and propaganda events.

¹¹⁰ Wæver, O. & Lausten, C. B. (2000) In Defence of Religion: Sacred Referent Objects for Securitization. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*. 29 (3). p. 729-31.

makes the compelling argument that humanitarian institutions, documents and, more broadly, the liberal order which today are referenced as “secular” can be understood as “religious”, partly due to their Christian origins; but more importantly, due to the meaning granted to them by adherents.

This is certainly the case where religious adherents, be they policy-makers or constituents, adopt the view that a liberal foreign policy, for example, is “right” because it has been bestowed on the US by God. But it is also the case where non-religious adherents support actions on the basis that they are “right” or done for the greater good. This is so, Barnett highlights, because such principles, although typically explicitly secular, are situated within a broader moral universe and, as such, have a *transcendental* dimension.¹¹¹ Theologians have taken issue with the suggestion that international ethics, though their origins may have been inspired by Christianity, are Christian if the persons who perform ethical acts do not do so based on a decidedly Christian persuasion. Bishop Robert Barron, for example, argues that while ethical principles are indeed contained in Jesus’ message, they are but a secondary concern of Christianity. The primary concern of Christianity rather lies with “go[ing] beyond the mind you have” (in Biblical Greek, *metanoiate*) and accepting the resurrection of Christ to mean the creation of a new world in which humanity is saved and the human mind geared toward building the Kingdom of God on Earth. Ethical principles of behaviour (as the “secular” understanding of them holds) will surely follow from such acceptance, but are only Christian if they occur as a consequence of thereof. As such, Barron argues, non-believers are perfectly capable of espousing ethical principles, as indeed was the case with the founders of virtue theory - Plato, Aristotle, Cicero - and their “neo-pagan successors.”¹¹² In this sense, ethical acts and rationales are not Christian; but if we understand religion as a phenomenon that has a

¹¹¹ Barnett, M. N. (2011) Another Great Awakening? International Relations Theory and Religion. p. 103-5.

¹¹² Barron, Bishop (2015) Fr. Barron on Christianity and Ethics. [Online]. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YgGxaEqLYhE>. [Accessed: 10 January, 2015.]

“transcendental” dimension, acts performed by persons, or states, based on them “being right” would indeed, as Barnett argues, qualify as a form of religion.

Judging from a plentitude of literatures, the transcendental dimension of human thought is one that persists as a result of humanity’s meaning-seeking condition. Scholar of Religion, Karen Armstrong (2001), for example, observes that man, since recognizably human, has sought for the meaning of our existence, albeit through different theologies; looking forward, she argues that “God isn’t going anywhere”.¹¹³ Even Stephen Hawking, world-renowned theoretical Physicist and self-proclaimed atheist,¹¹⁴ writes that “[since] the dawn of civilization, people have not been content to see events as unconnected and inexplicable. They have craved an understanding of the underlying order in the world”.¹¹⁵ For Hawking, this quest has fueled his search for a “theory of everything” - an all-encompassing theory to explain all of the universe's physical dimensions - which, if devised, he ironically argues “would be the ultimate triumph of human reason - for then we would know the mind of God.”¹¹¹ For most others, the quest has prompted questions related to the transcendental dimension of the human existence, and their version of “religion” would thus fit into the definitions by Haynes (2014), Horowitz (2009) and Shah, Stephan & Toft (2012), which brings us back to where we started, and nowhere nearer understanding what religion is and how to study it. To be sure, Shah, Stephan & Toft preface their definition by saying that religion need only include one or more of the elements that they list. In doing so, they may be exempt from the critique that their definition, by including “beliefs”, is biased against Buddhism; but they, in turn, offer a definition that is arguably so loosely structured that it fails to yield any valuable insight.

¹¹³ Armstrong, K. (2009) GOD. *Foreign Policy*. 175. p. 55.

¹¹⁴ See i.e. NBC NEWS (2014) I’m an Atheist: Stephen Hawking on God and Space Travel. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.nbcnews.com/science/space/im-atheist-stephen-hawking-god-space-travel-n210076> [Accessed: 1 February, 2015].

¹¹⁵ Ibid. p. 191.

2.2. Surveying the essentialist-functionalist definitional spectrum

Substantive understandings of religious doctrines

It seems a near impossible task to produce a definition of religion general enough in its terminology to encompass characteristics pertaining to all religions; and sufficiently limited in scope so as to not provide a definitional “home” for wide-ranging phenomena. A tempting solution to this problem would arguably be to adopt an approach whereby separate definitions are developed for separate religions, derived at on the basis of their respective substantive and functional characteristics. For example, Christianity may be identified as a monotheistic religion whose adherents believe in one supernatural God, embodied in the notion of the Holy Trinity, perform certain prayers to communicate with that God, and shape their worldview according to the Ten Commandments. Or Islam, as a monotheistic religion, whose adherents believe that the Prophet Muhammad delivered God’s word to Muslims (-to-be), and whose lives are shaped by the Five Pillars of Islam. But one need only look to cases where such attempts have led to over-simplification and unduly ascribed essentialist features to a religion, to understand the thin line between such efforts and essentialization of religions that post-secular and other scholars have rightfully warned against.¹¹⁶

The most well-known example of this is perhaps Huntington, who in his quest to depict a range of civilizations, some of which - like the “Islamic” civilization - he described with religious terminology, was vehemently accused of essentialism and ignorance. These accusations came not from people who disagreed with his basic argument (i.e. Realists who disagreed on the basis that the nation-state is still the main player in conflict); but from experts of the very civilizations/ religions that he ventured to define.

¹¹⁶ See i.e. Aslan, R. (2006) *No God but God: The Origins, Evolution and Future of Islam*. New York: Random House; Sheikh, M. K. (2012) How does religion matter? Pathways to religion in International Relations. *Review of International Studies*. 38 (2). p. 365-392.; Hurd, E. S. (2011) *Secularism and International Relations Theory*; and Barnett (2011) *Another Great Awakening?* International Relations Theory and Religion.

In his article titled *The Clash of Ignorance*, Edward Said argues from a characteristically post-colonial perspective that Huntington's thesis is based, as suggested by his article's provocatively worded title, on the latter's ignorance, particularly with regards to his categorization of "Islam" and "the West". Here, Said argues, Huntington is ignorant of the "internal dynamic" and "plurality" that exists within "Islam" and "the West" and the historical ties and encounters between them. Not only are such categorisations misrepresentative of reality; they are harmful in that they can serve as self-fulfilling prophecies: indeed, discourse in the immediate aftermath of the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, was framed in "West versus the rest" terms, largely serving as proof of Huntington's thesis. Said's verdict is that,

Huntington is an ideologist, someone who wants to make "civilizations" and "identities" into what they are not: shut-down, sealed-off entities that have been purged of the myriad currents and countercurrents that animate human history, and that over centuries have made it possible for that history not only to contain wars of religion and imperial conquest but also to be one of exchange, cross-fertilization and sharing.¹¹⁷

If unpersuaded by Said's passionate defence of Islam's particularities, one need only look to empirical cases of conflicts *within* religious doctrines to understand that the latter are far from monolithic entities. Wars of religion between Catholics and Protestants in Medieval Europe, the conflict in Northern Ireland between Catholic and Protestant nationalists in the late twentieth century, and contemporary fighting between Sunni and Shia Muslims in the Middle East, are but a few examples of how monolithic depictions of a religious doctrines can only go so far in understanding them. In the cases of Catholicism and Protestantism, and Sunnism and Shi'ism, the

¹¹⁷ Said, E. (2001) *The Clash of Ignorance*. *The Nation*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.thenation.com/article/clash-ignorance/>. [Accessed: 15 January, 2014.]

Christian and Islamic doctrines have developed into distinct denominations; but changes occur even *within* those denominations. The concept of *jihad* (struggle) as holy war, as opposed to striving for self-betterment, for example, was introduced by Pakistani ideologue and Imam Abu Ala Maududi (1903-79) and reiterated by Egyptian Islamic thinker Sayyid Qutb, both of whom were convinced that Western imperialism and, in the case of Qutb, the secularizing policies of Gamal Abdel Nasser, merited their controversial re-interpretation of Sunni doctrine.¹¹⁸ In a similar vein, within Judaism, members of the Ultra-Orthodox interpretive community refrained for the better half on the twentieth century from supporting the Zionist project on the grounds that the latter should follow the Messiah's arrival, only to support the Israeli state and especially its expansionist policies vis-a-vis Eretz Yisrael (Land of Israel) following Israel's remarkable military success in the 1967 war.¹¹⁹

To comprehend why religions are difficult to understand substantively by way of a general definition, it is useful to draw on Durkheim's widely celebrated *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912). In this work, Durkheim argues that while religious thought and practice have existed since time immemorial and will continue to do so, as a result of the perennial religious nature of man, only "primitive religions" can tell us something about the constituent elements of religious thought and practice common to *all* religions. By "primitive religion", Durkheim refers to religion in its simplest form; as it existed prior to any interference of interpretations, theologies and mythologies. This primitive religion is to be found only in small groups in which differences between individuals are minimal, and which espouse intellectual and moral uniformity as well as conformity of conduct. In such contexts, he argues, there is overlap between the individual type and the general type, unlike in larger, more complex groups where one encounters "[...] clash of theologies, the variations of

¹¹⁸ Armstrong, K. (2009) GOD. *Foreign Policy*. 175. p. 56.

¹¹⁹ See i.e. Ellis, M. H. (1987) *Toward a Jewish Theology of Liberation: The Challenge of the 21st Century*. Third Edition. Texas: Baylor University Press. p. 81-5.

ritual, the multiplicity of groupings, the diversity of individuals.”¹²⁰ The primitive religion thus captures religion as it is closest to its “original” state. In Durkheim’s reading, this precludes even the notion of God, as the idea of divinity, which most modern understandings of religion regard as a fundamental part of religion - indeed, the definitions outlined earlier in the chapter confirm this - is in fact a product of modern religions; rites of the primitive religions are not necessarily addressed to the divine¹²¹ Durkheim’s observation that outside the realm of primitive religion, there is no such things as a set of uniform constituent elements of religion, like that of Said, suggests that interpretations of a non-primitive, to borrow Durkheim’s terminology, religion are many just as they are inevitable.

Functionalist understandings of religion

On the opposite end to essentialism, is functionalism, by which any substantive definition of religion is refrained from altogether. As Sheikh (2012) notes, “religion”, in the functionalist approach, “is as religion does to society, to human beings, and so on”,¹²² and it is thus potentially no different to other phenomena that produce similar functions, like nationalism and political ideologies. The focus in the functionalist approach is to study the *effects*, be they economic, sociological or psychological, that religion has in a given context.¹²³ Scholars in the functionalist camp who are often mentioned in this vein are, rather surprisingly, from the discipline of Religious Studies and include the likes of Smith (1982) and McCutcheon (1998) Fitzgerald (1997) who have respectively argued that “religion is solely the creation of the scholar’s study”, that “the category

¹²⁰ Durkheim, E. (2001 [1912]) *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. Tr. by Carol Cosman. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 7.

¹²¹ Ibid. p. 1-10.

¹²² Sheikh, M. (2012) How does religion matter? Pathways to religion in International Relations. *Review of International Studies*. 38. p. 371.

¹²³ Ibid.

‘religion‘ has no analytic value whatsoever.” and that ““religion pics out nothing distinctive and [clarifies] nothing”.¹²⁴

The functionalist understanding of religion is useful to us because, as IR scholars, we are indeed interested in the *effects* that religion has on the social world, and much more so than in developing an understanding of elements of religious doctrine, their intellectual coherency, etc. in and of itself, fascinating though such a task may be. Moreover, the functionalist approach accommodates the various features of religion highlighted throughout this chapter, such as contingency of interpretation and fluidity of meaning. But, as Sheikh (2012) rightly points out, by disdaining substantive aspects of religion, as the functionalist approach per definition does, we overlook the distinctive characteristic of religion that may be all-important for understanding the larger IR-relevant phenomena that we are studying. Therefore, conceiving of religion as a *sui generis* phenomenon is imperative to fully understanding and explaining such phenomena. Crucially, Sheikh argues that it is possible to employ a substantive approach to understanding religion’s role without falling into the essentialist camp. She proposes that we can reach a necessary “middle way” between functionalism and essentialism, by conceiving of religion as *community of believers*. By assuming a link between the behavior of a belief community and the latter’s particular interpretive prism, she proposes that scholars can understand and explain behaviors by looking at what religion means to belief communities through, e.g. deciphering their particular understanding of what constitutes justice and pious behaviour.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ These quotes are taken from Bosco, R. M. (2009) Persistent Orientalisms: the concept of religion in international relations. *Journal of International Relations and Development*. 12. p. 101-2. For the original sources see McCutcheon, R. T. (1998) Redescribing ‘Religion’ as Social Formation: Toward a Social Theory of Religion. In Thomas A. Idinopulos and Brian C. Wilson, eds, *What is Religion? Origins, Definitions, and Explanations*, 51–73, Leiden: Brill.; Fitzgerald, T. (1997) ‘A Critique of “Religion” as a Cross-cultural Category’, *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 9(2). p. 91–110; Smith, J. Z. (1982) *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

¹²⁵ Sheikh, M. (2012) *How does religion matter? Pathways to religion in International Relations*. p. 370-3.

This is not without its challenges, of course, especially not if we simultaneously take account of the changing meaning that religious doctrine has for, even within, a given community, as the examples of Maududi's reformation of the *jihad* concept above shows. This is a valid consideration, but not one that should cause us to discredit Sheikh's insistence that navigating between essentialist and functionalist approaches to religion in IR will ultimately result in a more useful understanding of religion's role in international relations than would positions on any of the two extremes. It also responds to the encouragement of post-secular IR scholars like Petito & Hatzopoulos (2003) and Thomas (2000) to take religion seriously. It nonetheless begs the question of how to address the possibility that interpretative communities themselves develop (away) from their origin, to become something else. Here, we may benefit from engaging with the work of scholars of religion who, as will be discussed below, show that it is possible for specific interpretive strands within religions to uphold specific reference points which remain tied to the origin whilst other aspects develop. John Henry Cardinal Newman's seminal essay *On the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845)¹²⁶ is particularly relevant in this context. In it, Newman addresses the apparent contradictions in Catholic doctrine during its 1800 year long history, specifically those contradictions between Catholic doctrine of the Apostolic fathers and that of modern doctrine, arguing that they, rather than contradictions, represent a clarification of doctrine that, crucially, did not abandon the substance of Christian teachings but developed them according to the materials and conditions of its surroundings, in order that they come to fruition. This growing process, which Newman characterizes as "development", was not only natural, but necessary in order for Christian teachings be fully understood: "[...] whatever be the risk of corruption from intercourse with the world around, such a risk must be encountered if a great idea is duly to be understood, and much more if

¹²⁶ Newman wrote *On The Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845) during his period of reflections about transitioning from Anglican to Catholic priesthood. He converted Catholicism in 1845, in the same year that *On the Development of Christian Doctrine* was published. Along with Churchman John Keble and Reverend Edward Bouverie Pusey, he had founded the Oxford Movement in the early 1930s with the ambition of reviving the Catholic roots of Anglicanism, creating *Via Media* (The Middle Way) between Protestantism and Catholicism. Upon his realization that this was intellectually untenable, he left the Oxford Movement and became a Catholic Priest. Streater, D. (1992) Newman's Doctrine - Development or Deviation? *Church Society*. 106 (1).

is to be fully exhibited.¹²⁷ Development of doctrine is, Newman is careful to highlight, distinct from corruption or undermining of doctrine which occurs upon departure from the initial idea or principle. Newman's thesis is arguably supported by various ecumenical councils of the Catholic Church including the Council of Trent (1545-1563), Vatican I (1869-1870) and Vatican II (1962-1968), which have respectively addressed how to respond to contemporary issues of the Protestant Reformation, rationalism, and modernity, in a manner consistent with the Apostolic traditions and teachings.

William Graham, though not a believer like Newman but a scholar of Islamic religious history and textual traditions, makes a somewhat similar argument in relation to Islam. While recognizing that the manifestations of Islam in an enormously varied geographical, historical and cultural context make it difficult to speak of a singular Islam, Graham shows that, even so, a continuity across contexts and historical periods can be identified within different strands of Islam. Such continuity, he argues, exists due to a need, emphasized over the centuries in Muslim thought and institutions, for *ittisaliyah*; that is, the need for a sense of connectedness with the Prophet and the first Islamic community. The need for *ittisaliyah* is met through *isnād*; a “guarantee”, in the form of a report,¹²⁸ that any interpretation of the life of the Prophet or his community has been transmitted, uninterrupted, through a chain of individuals, that is traceable from the present-day interpreter to the Prophet himself or to one of his companions. *Isnād* is of crucial importance because the “truth” is not thought to be found by simply looking at ancient documents; rather, it is thought to be conveyed through teachings done by people who are both knowledgeable and righteous. It is

¹²⁷ Newman, J. H. C. (1960) *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*. p. 41.

¹²⁸ Preceding the interpretive text, an *isnād* takes the following form: “It has been related to me by A on the authority of B on the authority of C on the authority of D [who is usually a Companion of the Prophet] that Muhammad said [...]” Encyclopedia Britannica. (2015) *Isnād*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/296158/isnad> [Accessed: 22 May 2015]

necessary, furthermore, in order to interpret issues that are not addressed by the Qu'ran, the latter - although considered the ultimate authority for Muslims - not being a substantive book of laws practical guidance. As Graham notes, there must exist a “golden chain of sincere Muslims”¹²⁹ which ensures the “faithful copying, memorizing, reciting, and understanding of texts”.¹³⁰ Graham shows that Muslim traditionalism lies in maintaining *ittisaliyah*. Crucially, this does not mean a rejection of change amongst Muslims, but rather that present interpretations must be authorized through *isnad* which, in turn, due to its human element, has been elaborated upon in a multitude of ways, serving both modernists and reactionaries. Amongst these strands, however, continuities can be found.¹³¹

2.3. Conclusion

Based on the cumulative analysis above, religion is to be understood as a phenomenon that, although malleable, can nonetheless be studied substantively with reference to a community of believers, or “belief-community.” Importantly, such a community should not be conceived of in terms of a religious doctrine, which I take to mean e.g. Christianity, Islam or Judaism, due to the analytical flaws and dangers of Orientalism inherent to doctrinal essentialism that have been rendered throughout this chapter. Rather, it should be conceived of in terms of a bounded belief-community within a specific interpretive tradition such as Twelver Shi’ism or Wahhabi Sunnism, within the broader religious doctrine of, in this case, Islam, or Catholicism, in the case of Christianity. When reading *The Development of Christian Doctrine*, one is not in doubt that to Newman, who wrote the seminal work as a Catholic and as a Cardinal, the Catholic interpretive

¹²⁹ Graham, W. A. (1993) Traditionalism in Islam: An Essay in Interpretation. *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*. 23 (3), p. 507.

¹³⁰ Ibid. p. 507.

¹³¹ Ibid. p. 495-522.

tradition was the “true” Christianity. Though the world’s Catholics would likely agree with him, and while the case for Catholicism as the Christian “truth” is arguably particularly strong given Catholicism’s uninterrupted line of Papal authority and highly centralized interpretive body (the Magisterium) since its foundation some 2000 years ago, there is no one “true” version of any religion, but many.

For peace-loving Muslims, it will be a hard pill to swallow that the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) represents Islam in any way, shape or form. But, as shown by an emerging (albeit limited) body of literature, to which my own postdoctoral work aims to contribute, ISIS, by its own standards has just as much claim to Islam as does other interpretive communities within Islam. Far from revealing an incoherent message whereby extreme violence is justified with randomly assembled religious references, these sources collectively reveal a sophisticated narrative whose content builds on a set of concepts from the Qu’ran and Hadiths, interpreted according to historically-grounded interpretive methods (*isnad*). Wood (2015) notes how ISIS operates significantly, if entirely, according to the “takfiri” doctrine of Islam, which prescribes killing of infidels in accordance with a specific set of legal precautions; principles of “offensive jihad”, which dictate aggressive expansion into non-Muslim lands although temporary peace treaties are allowed; and, Prophetic teachings of the apocalypse, which is expected to manifest in Jerusalem, Istanbul and Dabiq. These messages fit logically into the broader narrative which frames ISIS’ military successes and territorial conquests as proof of God’s approval that, moreover, hastens the apocalypse as well as the rewards the latter brings to al-Baghdadi and the subjects Caliphate; a message that is explicitly different than that of competitive self-identified *Islamic* forces like Al Qaeda and the

Taliban.¹³² More to it, interviews with some of its most ardent supporters suggest that ISIS subjects are ostensibly convinced in the Islamic essence of the ISIS doctrine.¹³³ As Wood (2015) notes about UK-based spiritual leader and frequent guest on British television shows, Anjem Choudary, “he and his disciples sincerely believe in the Islamic State and, on matters of doctrine, speak in its voice.”¹³⁴ Many Muslims will disagree with ISIS’ claim to Islam, as have the senior clerical leadership in Saudi Arabia, which issued a *fatwa* (religious legal ruling) declaring ISIS’ violence “a heinous crime” under Islamic law.¹³⁵ However, such disagreements but confirm the proposition that there is no one authentic Islam, but many. As Professor of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University, Bernard Haykel, bluntly observes: “As if there is such a thing as Islam!”¹³⁶ While God might rectify this understanding on Judgement Day, scholars would, until then, benefit from approaching *all* religions according to the understanding they exist in many different “authentic” versions.

Capturing these authentic versions of religions can be done, as I have argued, through conceiving of them in terms of bounded community-religions. But, even in their bounded form, the community-religions should not be conceived of as static; as Newman (1845) and Graham (1993) show, interpretive traditions develop according to the circumstances they, or specifically their interpreters, encounter. Crucially, this development does not necessarily “corrupt”, to borrow Newman’s terminology, interpretive traditions in the eyes of the interpreters, but rather signifies their natural development whereby their meaning becomes fully crystalized. The community-religions to which Khomeini, Fahd and Begin belonged are respectively Twelver Shi’ism, Wahhabi Sunnism and neo-Revisionism (the latter is not strictly a community-*religion*, as will be elaborated in chapter 4). As

¹³² Cronin, A. K. (2015) ISIS Is Not a Terrorist Group: Why Counterterrorism Won't Stop the Latest Jihadist Threat. *Foreign Affairs*.

¹³³ Wood, G. in THE ATLANTIC (2015) What ISIS Really Wants. [Online] Available from: <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/03/what-isis-really-wants/384980/> [Accessed: 1 October, 2015].

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ THE GUARDIAN (2015) Saudi Clerics declare ISIS terrorism a "heinous crime." [Online] Available from: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/> [Accessed: 17 September, 2015].

¹³⁶ Wood, G. in THE ATLANTIC (2015) *What ISIS Really Wants*.

must be assumed for all members of a community-religion, Khomeini, Fahd and Begin's personal experiences and relationship with God - their "faith" - were brought to bear on their interpretation of the "authentic" religion of their respective communities-religions. Their "faith" cannot be understood, however, without reference to the community-religion to which they belonged, just as the latter cannot be understood without reference to the "faith" that the leaders share with other individuals; I term the conjunction between community religion and faith, the "religious beliefs" of the interpreter. The case study chapters (4, 5 and 6) will discuss neo-revisionism, Twelver Shi'ism and Wahhabi Sunnism as community-religions in the context of the individual world-view of Begin, Khomeini and Fahd, respectively. Before embarking upon those analyses, the following chapter (3) will discuss the socio-political regional and domestic environments within which the foreign policy leaders were operating. This is done, in part, to set the scene for the reader, but also to understand the context which, in line with what this chapter has argued, must be assumed to affect have affected the leaders' religious beliefs.

CHAPTER 3

SETTING THE SCENE:

THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT OF BEGIN, KHOMEINI AND FAHD

3.0 Introduction

The Middle East, stretching from the Maghreb in the West to the Arabian Peninsula in the East, is generally understood to be a region characterized by turmoil and instability, in which ideologies of different kinds are fiercely at play. The late 1970s through to the early 1990s, the period that this thesis is concerned with, is far from an exception to such a characterization. The Arab states' dismal defeat in their six-day war with Israel in 1967, which resulted in Israel's capture of Arab territories in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, Gaza Strip, Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights, marked the decline of the pan-Arab nationalist ideology that had flourished in the region since the withdrawal of British and French colonial powers following World War II. Islamism, whose intellectual seeds were planted already in the late nineteenth century by scholars like Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani, and furthered by Imam and teacher Hassan al-Banna in the early twentieth century, quickly gained appeal with Muslim movements and societies across the region, setting off a number of significant socio-political trends and events.

The Islamic ideology manifested most conspicuously in Iran's landmark Islamic Revolution of 1979, the effects of which were felt far beyond Iranian borders into the Levant where the Shi'ite, Iran-backed *Hizbollah* (Party of God) movement formed in opposition to Israel; and into Saudi Arabia's Eastern province, where Shi'ite minorities galvanized around the Islamic populism and fierce anti-Western discourse emanating from the newly formed Islamic Republic. Most dramatically, the Islamic Revolution prompted Saddam Hussein to invade Iran, out of fear that it

might spread to his Shi'ite-majority Iraq, and with that he initiated an eight-year long conflict that would turn out to be the deadliest of the twentieth century. In Israel, too, the ideological landscape changed following the 1967 war. The remarkable military victory of a small, young state over a swath of hostile Arab armies not only made Israel emerge as strong military power, but also fostered a religious and nationalist sentiment in the Jewish state that would manifest in a forceful settler movement bent on consolidating Israeli presence on *Eretz Yisrael* (Land of Israel). Moreover, to the outrage of some Orthodox Jewish domestic movements, Israel signed the US-mediated Camp David Accords with Egypt, agreeing to relinquish Israeli control of Sinai and work towards an autonomy agreement with Palestinians in the West Bank.

Not coincidentally, the latter never materialized, intensifying the already intense anger of Arab leaders and populations towards the entrenched Arab-Israeli conflict, with Arab leaders gathering at the Baghdad Summit in 1979 where they agreed to expel Egypt from the Arab League and call for Israeli withdrawal of Palestinian territories. As Israel made peace with its Egyptian neighbor to the West as a result of the Accords, Begin launched a military invasion against its Northern one, following rockets attacks from Lebanon-based PLO militants; a conflict that would continue beyond Begin's resignation in 1984. Saudi Arabia would soon experience its own major conflict when Hussein, only two years after the Iran-Iraq war's end in 1988, invaded Kuwait. Fearing an imminent attack, Fahd instantly invited US troops to defend Saudi Arabia; a mission that, while successful in defeating Hussein, would consolidate a religious fundamentalist ideology, fiercely opposed to the West and the monarchies supporting it, that had clandestinely been growing throughout the Kingdom since the 1970s.

As this chapter will show, Begin, Khomeini and Fahd operated within relatively unconstrained decision making structures with regards to their foreign policies; none of the leaders were, however, immune or irresponsive to domestic social and political developments that were shaped, in no small

part, by the regional landscape. The purpose of this chapter is two-fold. On the one hand, the chapter seeks to depict the socio-political landscape in Israel, Iran and Saudi Arabia as they existed during the leaderships of Begin, Khomeini and Fahd, paying special attention to trends and events which occurred in relation to the foreign policy outcomes studied for each of the case studies. It does so because religious beliefs of the leaders in question, as outlined in the previous chapter, are understood to be shaped, to a greater or lesser extent, by their operating environment. On the other hand, the chapter seeks to detail the foreign policy decision making structures of Begin, Khomeini and Fahd, with a view to show that all three leaders could operate with relative autonomy (*how* they did so is the subject matter of the following case study chapters). This dimension is important to capture, especially for the Israeli and Iranian case studies, because it allows us to understand, in the case study chapters that follow this one, a stronger link between leaders' religious beliefs and their foreign policy, than had the leaders exercised little autonomy over the latter.

The chapter proceeds in three main parts focused on Israel, Iran and Saudi Arabia, respectively, each showing, first, the domestic social and political landscape in those countries and second, the decision making structures within which Begin, Khomeini and Fahd operated. Specifically, the chapter's first section shows that in Israel, following that country's decisive military victory of 1967, a settler movement determined to retain territories of *Eretz Yisrael* emerged alongside an increasing religiosity and right-wing nationalist sentiment amongst, especially, the nation's young. This changing ideological landscape culminated in an electoral victory for Menachem Begin and his Likud party in 1977, and again in 1981, whose two major foreign policy outcomes included the Camp David Accords and the launch of Operation Peace for Galilee into Lebanon. While the former gained support from a majority of the Israeli public, a small but vocal religious segment opposed the Accords' requirement that Israel withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula and, they feared, Judea and

Samaria. While the public as a whole was supportive of Operation Peace for Galilee, that support decreased in line with Israel's increasing presence in Lebanon along with the deaths of Israeli soldiers and Lebanese civilians, that it implied. With regards to the foreign policy decision making structures that Begin worked within, the chapter shows that despite complex bureaucratic structure, Israeli foreign policy was, by many accounts, a result of Begin's forceful personality. Although the Knesset could restrict him, it did not do so in matters related to the Camp David Accords and Operation Peace for Galilee.

The chapter's second section shows that, around the time of the Camp David Accords, Iran's unfolding revolution culminated in the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, with Ayatollah Khomeini as its ultimate legal and political authority. The ideological fervour that drove the Islamic revolution and sustained the new Republic in the early years of its war with Iraq, started to wane in line with Iran's economy and military which, to the outrage of conservative clerics in the government, forced Khomeini to terminate the war in 1988. Only following his *fatwa* (religious legal ruling) against the British-born novelist Salman Rushdie whose book *The Satanic Verses* (1988) he deemed blasphemous against Islam, did the ideological fervour from the revolution reinvigorate within - and beyond - Iran. In terms of Khomeini's decision making context, Khomeini was, by constitutional agreement and by practice, the undisputed leader and decision maker of the Islamic Republic. While he worked alongside clashing and competing Conservative and Radical government forces, and would interchangeably support both of them, he remained the final authority on all matters of domestic and foreign policy until his death in 1989.

The chapter's third and final section shows that in Saudi Arabia, despite its religiously conservative system of governance, extremists and regular conservative citizens pressed, albeit in different ways, for further religious conservatism in the Kingdom's domestic and foreign affairs. This reflected in a

consciously hostile Saudi Arabian foreign policy vis-a-vis the Arab-Israeli conflict (the latter had been rendered an *Islamic*, rather than an *Arab* issue as a result of Khomeini's efforts and thus necessitated a response from the Kingdom as the self-identified leader of the Muslim world). Ideological trends within and beyond Saudi Arabia became relegated to secondary important, however, following Iraq invasion of Kuwait, after which Fahd overlooked religious and cultural sensitivities by inviting US troops to defend his Kingdom. Whilst successful in doing that, as well as expelling Iraq from Kuwait, this foreign policy move triggered an extremist backlash that would oppose the regime far beyond Fahd's reign. As far as Fahd's foreign policy decision making context is concerned, the chapter shows that Fahd, both as Crown Prince under King Khalid's rule, and as King from 1982, was officially the ultimate authority on foreign policy matters though he, as per Saudi tradition, operated within a context where he necessitated, if unofficially, the support of important princes as well as the Kingdom's religious establishment.

3.1 The Jewish State of Israel

3.1.1 The socio-political landscape of Israel (ca. 1967-84)

Israel's decisive military success in the six-day war of 1967 had a significant impact upon the country's social and political landscape, particularly amongst its younger members of society. A "Young Guard" faction emerged within the National Religious Party (NRP), Israel's hitherto biggest and strongest religious party which had formed part of Labour coalitions since the establishment of Israel in 1948 and, prior to that, in the World Zionist Organization.¹³⁷ The emerging Young Guard, drawing its inspiration from Rabbi Avraham Y. H. Kook, held that Israel's capture of Jerusalem, the

¹³⁷ Religious Zionism had initially agreed to engage in a Zionist, secular state-building project, because they agreed that the Zionist movement (at the World Zionist Organisation) and later the State of Israel was a necessary first step towards divine redemption and thus agreed to delay the implementation of their vision of a theocratic state of Israel. Frisch, H. & Sandler, S. (2004) Religion, State, and the International System in the Israel-Palestinian Conflict. *International Political Science Review*: p. 82.

West Bank and Gaza during the 1967 war was a sign of God's support for Jews' restoration of its biblical land and, as such, they viewed retention of this land as a religious duty. Some of its members furthermore thought that retention of the territories occupied during the 1967 war, and building Jewish settlements upon them, would increase the spirituality of Israeli society and ultimately speed up the coming of the Messiah.¹³⁸ Though the older segments of NRP did not necessarily advocate the militant view of the Young Guard, the latter would eventually become the dominant element determining NRP policy, to the weakening of the traditional leadership of NRP which had historically been more pragmatic and concerned primarily with lobbying for religious interests in what they considered a secular society. Due to the pressure from the Young Guards, the NRP, while still a member of the Labour coalition, refrained from endorsing Labour's "land for peace" stance vis-a-vis the Occupied Territories; a significant shift from the NRP's hitherto agreement with Labour to concern itself primarily with religious education and not with issues related to foreign affairs and security.¹³⁹

From the NRP's Young Guard movement emerged, in 1974, Gush Emunim, a movement whose members were "totally religious, messianic and fundamentalist in their beliefs."¹⁴⁰ Their religiously derived concerns were, as per their own declaration, "the Torah and territories"; that is, to increase religiosity of Israel and retention of the territories captured during the 1967 war.¹⁴¹ Weissbrod (1981) offers the following comprehensive summary of their ideology:

a religious revolutionary ideology, formulated by highly orthodox students of Talmudic colleges. It reinterprets all components of original Labour Zionism, implied in the renewed use of the term "Zionism", but in a Jewish

¹³⁸ Tessler, M. (1986) The Political Right in Israel: Its Origins, Growth, and Prospects. *Journal of Palestine Studies*. 15 (2). p. 32-33.

¹³⁹ Frisch, H. & Sandler, S. (2004) *Religion, State, and the International System in the Israel-Palestinian conflict*. p. 83.

¹⁴⁰ Sprinzak, E. (1989) The Emergence of the Israeli Radical Right. *Comparative Politics*. 21 (2). p. 174.

¹⁴¹ Tessler, M. (1986) *The Political Right in Israel: Its Origins, Growth, and Prospects*. p. 33-35.

religious vein. National redemption applies to the entire Holy Land, including the territories on the West Bank occupied in the Six Day War, since these were given by God to the People of Israel. Settlement of these territories thus becomes a holy duty and commandment. Social and individual salvation are to be effected in these settlements in the Holy Land, to consist of a new form of communality based on Judaic principles of mutual aid and mutual responsibility. The establishment of settlements in the Holy Land, and specifically on the West Bank, is focal to New Zionism, as they are the means of implementing this ideology. The religious character of New Zionism justifies the occupation and settlement of conquered areas of the Holy Land and resolves the crisis of identity: the rift between Israeliness and Jewishness is bridged by a return to Jewish religious values which incorporate the Jewish heritage.¹⁴²

A militant and disproportionately vocal movement, Gush Emunim proactively set out to establish and occupy settlements as well as to conduct seminars and other social events designed to spread its message, and gain sympathizers. It was successful in doing so insofar as “[Gush Emunim’s] new spirit soon lit the hearts of many Israelis”, just as the movement “gain[ed] first the support of the young, and subsequently of a large part of the general Israeli public”.¹⁴³ Gush Emunim would form an important part of the broader Land of Israel Movement, an ultra-nationalist umbrella organization which counted a diverse set of elements including religious fundamentalists, military hardliners and labor settlement fanatics, amongst its supporters.¹⁴⁰ Collectively, and vehemently, the Land of Israel movement advocated for Israeli retention of, and settlement on, territories captured

¹⁴² Weissbrod, L. (1981) From Labour Zionism to New Zionism: Ideological Change in Israel. *Theory and Society*: 10 (6). p. 794-95.

¹⁴³ Sprinzak, E. (1989) *The Emergence of the Israeli Radical Right*. p. 173.

during the Six Day War, especially the West Bank and Gaza but, for Gush Emunim, also Sinai. The ideological changes within Israel reflected in the increasing popularity - particularly amongst the young - of religious and nationalist groups and, related, in the public opinion polls conducted around the same period. In 1973, 36% of people aged 17-20 and 25% of those aged 20+ “identified with rightist parties”, just as 12% of people in the 17-20 category and 8% in the 20+ category “identified with religious parties”.¹⁴⁴

As it would turn out, the changing ideological landscape within Israel following the six day war led to a shift in the country’s political landscape in 1977, when, for the first time in its relatively short history, Israel would have a right-wing government, led by Menachem Begin’s Likud (*Consolidation*) party. Tessler (1986) describes the 1977 election as “the earthquake” that “shook [Israel’s] political landscape”, an indication of the significant political change that it represented.¹⁴⁵

Although due in part to growing discontent with Labour’s economic policies and scandals within the party, an important part of this change can, as the opinion poll results above suggest, be attributed to a genuine identification by the public since the early 70s with the religious and nationalist parties, which made up Begin’s coalition. Moreover, Begin and his nationalist-religious coalition would succeed in the national elections of 1981, as well, and continue as the governing Israeli leadership until Begin’s resignation in 1984. The parties of Begin’s coalition jointly called for territorial maximalism throughout *Eretz Yisrael* and a generally militant stance vis-a-vis Arabs within and beyond Israel.¹⁴³

To be sure, there were nuances between the parties concerning what exactly constituted *Eretz Yisrael*, and why Israel should strive to settle that land. The NRP, under increasing influence of its

¹⁴⁴ Weissbrod, L. (1981) *From Labour Zionism to New Zionism: Ideological Change in Israel*. p. 794.

¹⁴⁵ Tessler, M. (1986) *The Political Right in Israel: Its Origins, Growth, and Prospects*. p. 12.

Young Guard faction which, in turn, was increasingly supportive of Gush Emunim, advocated for territorial maximalism on the basis of explicitly religious claims to the land. To this end, its members, as we saw above, pursued settlement-building and educational projects. Agudat, an Ultra-Orthodox political party, was concerned primarily with Israel's domestic religious affairs, such as promotion of Orthodox Jewish law and education, and not at all with matters of foreign policy, including the Occupied Territories.¹⁴⁶ Its Ultra-Orthodox members held the strong belief that, only upon arrival of the Messiah, would the Jewish people be reestablished on Biblical Land.¹⁴⁷ It joined the Likud coalition, following twenty five years of non-participation in Israel's government; its concern as a political party to promote Jewish law and education was, however, less an implicit endorsement of the Zionist project, as it was a sense of duty to ensure the wellbeing of Jews through promoting Orthodox Jewish law and education. In return for Likud's concession in these areas, Agudat lent its support for maximalist and militarist policies though its doing so, from its Ultra Orthodox members' perspective, neither helped nor hindered the redemption of the Jews.¹⁴⁸ Throughout both of Begin's governments, Agudat, though not holding any cabinet positions, pressed hard for increased government legislation in the area of religious law, threatening to quit the coalition if not enacted; possibly due to these efforts, did the frequency of conversion to religiosity in Israeli society increase.¹⁴⁹

Likud, a merger of various parties including the dominant Herut party, advocated the position of territorial maximalism and a general militant preparedness. Though grounded in Revisionist

¹⁴⁶ Frisch, H. & Sandler, S. (2004) *Religion, State, and the International System in the Israel-Palestinian Conflict*. p. 82.

¹⁴⁷ Since the party's founding in 1912, this belief has meant that its members have refused to support the Zionist movement and the state-building project inherent to the latter's mission. Only when conditions for Eastern European Jews became sufficiently horrendous in the 1930s, did Agudat agree to cooperate with the Zionists and it became an independent political party in newly established Israel.

¹⁴⁸ Despite its stance of indifference vis-a-vis Israeli retention of Eretz Yisrael, Agudat occupied one of the largest settlements ("Emmanuel") in the West Bank. It insisted, though, on indifference as to whether the land on which Emmanuel stood, was governed by Israeli or Arab authorities.

¹⁴⁹ Weissbrod, L. (1981) *From Labour Zionism to New Zionism: Ideological Change in Israel*. p. 777, 798.

Zionism and, as that movement, considered secular-nationalist rather than religious-nationalist - certainly next to the Orthodox Young Guard and Ultra-Orthodox Agudat - the lines between secular and religious nationalism were blurred amongst parties of Israel's right during this period. Herut, for example, rejected the secular notions of a Jewish state held by Labour, and, to that end, counted amongst its priorities to serve the needs of Judaism inside Israel.¹⁵⁰ The case study in chapter 4 will detail the significance of this with reference to Begin's foreign policy.

In the early aftermath of the 1977 election, the unity between the coalition parties was notably strong. This was largely due to Menachem Begin, who united parties and constituencies of the right with his renowned oratory skills and ability to navigate the nationalist-religious spectrum in ways that would resonate across the board. The right-wing unity would be severely strained, however, by Begin's signing of the Camp David Accords, alongside Egyptian President Anwar Al Sadat, in 1978. The Accords agreed to a peace treaty with Egypt, in exchange for Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula, as well as the initiation of an autonomy plan to solve the "Palestinian problem" in the Occupied West Bank or, as Begin referred incessantly to it, Judea and Samaria. A vast majority of Israeli public, and indeed Likud, applauded this achievement. Begin's recognized this sentiment of approval, as his speech before the Knesset on 20 November 1977, during Anwar al-Sadat's first visit to Jerusalem, shows:

Today, Jerusalem is bedecked with two flags - the Egyptian and the Israeli.

Together, Mr. President, we have seen our little children waving both flags.

Let us sign a peace treaty and establish such a situation forever both in Jerusalem and in Cairo. I hope the day will come when Egyptian children

¹⁵⁰ Tessler, M. (1986) The Political Right in Israel: Its Origins, Growth, and Prospects. *Journal of Palestine Studies*. 15 (2). p. 32.

will wave Israeli and Egyptian flags together, just as the Israeli children are waving both of these flags together in Jerusalem [...]¹⁵¹

A smaller, though very vocal, minority vehemently opposed the Accords on the grounds that withdrawal from Sinai and, worse, compromising Judea and Samaria (Biblical land of highest stature) would unnecessarily delay national redemption. To Gush Emunim and its supporters, Camp David's signified a "religious affront of the first degree", and Begin's signing of the accords was symbolically associated with the shameful peace signed with Hitler in 1939 by Britain's Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. The "betrayal", as was his accord signing characterised, prompted establishment of "The Covenant of Eretz Yisrael Loyalists"; a large-scale coalition composed of student groups, political movements and settler supporters of the maximalist cause, which sought to "alert the public about the grave error committed by Begin" as well as lobby Likud for a reversal of policy.¹⁵² Most radical, was what would later become known as the "Jewish Underground"; a secret establishment with close ties to Gush Emunim which planned terrorist attacks against the Muslim Dome of the Rock, based on the conviction that "infidel" presence on what was also a holy Jewish site (Temple Mount) was what led to to the national offense of Camp David in the first place. Liberating Temple Mount, the holiest site of Judaism, was thought to hasten national redemption.¹⁵³

As would become evident throughout the Camp David proceedings and their aftermath, Begin never intended to relinquish Israeli presence on Judea and Samaria, and as a result he never did so. Moreover, he continued to support the NRP and Gush Emunim in their settlement drive on those territories and in Gaza. This reflected in the number of settlements in those territories, which rose

¹⁵¹ Hurwitz, H. & Medad, Y (eds.) (2011) *Peace in the Making: The Menachem Begin-Anwar El-Sadat Personal Correspondence*. Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House in cooperation with the Menachem Begin Heritage Centre. p. 32.

¹⁵² Sprinzak, E. (1989) *The Emergence of the Israeli Radical Right*. p. 175.

¹⁵³ Ibid. p. 176.

from 27 in 1977 to 77 1981.¹⁵⁴ The latter's objection to removal of settlements from Sinai, was, however, not accommodated, prompting the establishment of the Movement to Halt the Retreat in Sinai, comprised mostly of Gush Emunim adherents. This movement brought settler families and communities, including Jewish seminaries, to Sinai and proactively set up and lived a "normal life" until they were evacuated by Israeli soldiers in 1981.¹⁵⁵

Following the successful or disastrous, depending on who is asked, Camp David Accords, Begin's attention was forced to shift from Israel's Western neighbour, to its Northern one. Increasingly hostile developments in Lebanon, including PLO's firing of artillery shells into Israel's Galilee region, and increased anti-Israel Syrian military presence in that country, prompted Begin's launch of Operation Peace for Galilee or, what is otherwise known as, the First Lebanon War. The latter officially sought to push PLO factions 40 kilometers north of the Israel-Lebanon border in order to protect Israeli civilians in the Galilee region, though its aims would come to include destruction of PLO infrastructure in Lebanon, installment of a Christian Lebanese, pro-Israel government, and expulsion of the Syrian army from Lebanon. The Israeli public was overwhelmingly supportive of Begin's foreign policy decision to launch a military operation in Lebanon; so much so, in fact, that former Israeli deputy national security adviser Charles Freilich (2012) describes Begin as being "bound to action" by "his public commitments" during the operation's early stages.¹⁵⁶ As the operation went awry in its later stages, particularly following an attack on the IDF headquarters in Lebanon which killed 36 Israeli soldiers, public opinion became heavily divided.¹⁵⁷ Begin resigned shortly after, due partly to his sense of responsibility for lives of soldiers lost.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ Frisch, H. & Sandler, S. (2004) Religion, State, and the International System in the Israel-Palestinian Conflict. p. 83.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Freilich, C. D. (2012) Israel in Lebanon - Getting It Wrong: The 1982 Invasion, 2000 Withdrawal, and 2006 War. *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs*. 6 (3). p. 68.

¹⁵⁷ Ynet News (2013) *The Lebanon War (1982)*. [Online] Available from <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3631005,00.html>, [Accessed: 7 December, 2013].

¹⁵⁸ ISRAEL MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (2013) *Operation Peace for Galilee*. [Online] Available from: http://www.knesset.gov.il/lexicon/eng/shalom_galil_eng.htm [Accessed: 8 December, 2013].

3.1.2 Menachem Begin's decision making environment

Foreign policy decision making in Israel is, despite an enormously complex bureaucratic structure, informal, improvisational, highly personalized and subjective to policy preferences of the leadership in question. This has been the case throughout Israel's relatively short history, but perhaps no more so than during the Prime Ministership of Menachem Begin, from 1977 to 1984. Begin's foreign policy was, by all accounts, largely a one-man show which, as the case study in chapter 4 will detail, meant a stubborn and ardent insistence on Israeli sovereignty over *Eretz Yisrael*, and secure borders with neighboring states. Though the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 was largely planned and carried out under the command of Defence Minister Ariel Sharon - and dubbed "Arik's war" by some for that reason,¹⁵⁹ - that war was made possible only by Begin's acquiescence. Begin's centralized decision making approach was reinforced by his total disregard of international opinion. In areas where Begin's decision making was contingent upon external approval, such as parliamentary approval for signing the Camp David Accords and launching Operation Peace for Galilee, he was largely unrestrained though, in the latter case, as we will see, this had less to do with genuine parliamentary approval than with Sharon's deceptive behaviour vis-a-vis the Knesset.

The government

As Prime Minister, Begin "[acted] on the basis of his free will, dictating to others his political preferences, and determining the timing of his own initiatives" just as he "did not accommodate pressure but resisted and often overcame it".¹⁶⁰ In his discussion about Israeli national security policy, Freilich (2012) outlines the characteristics of decision making structures and processes in

¹⁵⁹ Schiff, Z. & Ya'ari, E. (1985) *Israel's Lebanon War*. New York: Simon and Schuster, p. 305.

¹⁶⁰ Peleg, I. (1987) *Begin's Foreign Policy, 1977-1983. Israel's Move to the Right*. Connecticut: Greenwood Press, Inc. p. xii.

Israel, that make such centralized decision making possible. One essential reason is the lacking capacity of key offices, including the Prime Minister's Office, Cabinet Secretariat, Foreign Ministry and Ministry of Defence, to conduct systematic policy formulation, coordination and assessment. The cabinet, too, is weak with many members being inadequately equipped for the ministerial roles in which they serve, leading to Prime Ministers relying on a few selected confidantes for consultation.¹⁶¹ In the case where ministers disagree vehemently with the Prime Minister, the latter is not bound to change course. Thus, the vehement opposition to Begin's settlement policies in the West Bank by Foreign Minister, Moshe Dayan, and Defense Minister, Ezer Weizmann, led to their respective resignations rather than Begin's policy reformulation.¹⁶² Similarly, in the context of Operation Peace for Galilee, Begin would silence anyone who attempted to challenge Sharon, as a result of which "few ministers [were] likely to defy Begin and risk incurring his wrath."¹⁶³ Only the IDF (Israeli Defence Forces), through its Planning Branch established following the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, have such capacity and uses it to offer advice on foreign policy and defence matters. It typically does so through its highest authority, the Chief of Staff who, nonetheless is subordinate to the Minister of Defence. Its influence notwithstanding, the IDF's approach to national security is highly pragmatic, and focused on analysing "military ramifications" of a given policy, rather than imposing its own policy.¹⁶⁴ Indeed, as Peleg (1987) writes, Begin "enjoy[ed] control over the IDF".¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹ Freilich, C. D. (2012) Israel in Lebanon - Getting It Wrong: The 1982 Invasion, 2000 Withdrawal, and 2006 War. *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs*. 6 (3). p. 68.

¹⁶² Dayan, a former Alignment member of Israel's political left, opposed Begin's insistence on settlement-building in Judea and Samaria, felt increasingly bypassed on foreign policy issues and eventually resigned in October 1979.⁵ Similarly, Defense Minister Ezer Weizmann, who in the years preceding Camp David had become increasingly dovish in his foreign policy stance, disagreed with Begin's uncompromisable settlement policies and resigned from the government in 1980.

¹⁶³ Schiff, Z. & Ya'ari, E. (1985) *Israel's Lebanon War*. New York: Simon and Schuster, p. 302-3.

¹⁶⁴ Freilich, C. D. (2006) National Security Decision-Making in Israel: Processes, Pathologies and Strengths. *Middle East Journal*. 60 (4). p. 661.

¹⁶⁵ Peleg, I. (1987) *Begin's Foreign Policy, 1977-1983. Israel's Move to the Right*. p. xi.

Such features foster an environment where decisions are made on a short-term and tactical, rather than strategic, ad hoc basis. This is reinforced by a pervading self-confidence of Prime Ministers and senior officials, most of whom hold extensive political and military experience, in their respective understandings of Israel's national security concerns. Moreover, a general and conscious avoidance, by those same officials, of staff work like preparatory notes produced by the various national security bureaucracies, underlines this. More implicitly, it is fostered by Israeli tradition which celebrates leaders who advance unconstrained in their decision making. As Freilich points out, these tendencies are reflected in Begin's approach to the Camp David negotiations, to which he went without preparatory documents and having rejected a major IDF study, just as he adopted his position on the peace process "solely, or almost solely, on [his] own cognizance."¹⁶⁶ Similarly, in the context of Operation Peace for Galilee in 1982, Begin and, then Defence Minister, Ariel Sharon kept extensive staff work which had been produced prior to the invasion, from the cabinet.¹⁶⁷

For all of its informality, the Israeli decision making structure calls for consultation with, and approval from, the Knesset in cases of "supreme importance" and "fundamental partisan discord."¹⁶⁸ This is far from a straightforward process, given the low electoral threshold (1%)¹⁶⁹ for parties, which in turn renders Israeli politics fragile and possibly very fractioned. It is, nonetheless, a process that Begin held in high regard. On one occasion, he stated that "Ours is a parliamentary, not a presidential, regime, and our task is to implement the policy that the Knesset has decided to undertake."¹⁷⁰ Similarly, he pronounced before the Knesset that, as far as the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Treaty was concerned,

¹⁶⁶ Freilich, C. D. (2006). *National Security Decision-Making in Israel: Processes, Pathologies and Strengths*. p. 653.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. p. 647.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 641.

¹⁶⁹ The electoral threshold changed to 2% in 1990.

¹⁷⁰ Hurwitz, H. & Medad, Y. (eds.) (2011) *Peace in the Making: The Menachem Begin-Anwar El-Sadat Personal Correspondence*. p. 184-5.

[...] “It is a clear cut decision that we are making today. We will not delude anyone. If the Knesset so decides, the decision will be implemented [...] I beseech each and every one, for God’s sake, vote as you wish but let a clear-cut decision be made by the majority in the Knesset so that tomorrow we can begin the work of preparing the negotiations and, God willing, sign a peace treaty.”¹⁷¹

The foreign policy outcomes examined in the following chapter - Camp David Accords and Operation Peace for Galilee - are both considered cases of “supreme importance” whose fruition in turn necessitated parliamentary approval. In neither case, however, did the Knesset majority go against Begin’s preferred policy. The ninth Knesset (1977-1981) approved the Camp David Framework. This is reflected in the final votes on that matter where 84 Knesset members voted in favour, 19 Knesset members voted against and 17 Knesset members abstained from voting.¹⁷² Similarly, the tenth Knesset (1981-84) supported (along with Begin and his cabinet) the launch of Operation Peace for Galilee. This was not as much due to the genuine approval by the Knesset and cabinet of the invasion, as it was to the efforts of Ariel Sharon who, as has since been widely documented, engaged in deceptive efforts to secure the backing of both the Knesset and cabinet.. These efforts included Sharon evading the Knesset’s supervisory role through exploiting cracks in the political system and, crucially, either manipulating or withholding vital intelligence by blocking the flow of vital information to the cabinet and, as such, essentially “circumvent[ing] democratic procedures.”¹⁷³ Sharon’s deceptive efforts may possibly also have implicated Begin, as the Defence

¹⁷¹ Ibid. p. 286.

¹⁷² Hurwitz, H. & Medad, Y (eds.) (2011) *Peace in the Making: The Menachem Begin-Anwar El-Sadat Personal Correspondence*. p. 287.

¹⁷³ Schiff, Z. & Ya'ari, E. (1985) *Israel's Lebanon War*. New York: Simon and Schuster, p. 302.

Minister has been described as “untiringly [procuring] Begin’s backing [by kindling] the Prime Minister’s personal zeal to penetrate right down to “Arafat’s bunker”¹⁷⁴ - a reference Begin made prior to the war to express his eagerness to eliminate the PLO’s leader. As mentioned earlier, who though he necessitated Begin’s acquiescence to carry out the invasion of Lebanon, Sharon is considered the primary architect and driving force behind it. Indeed, the Kahane report of 1983 - a Commission of Inquiry supervised by two Israeli Supreme Court Judges and a Major General to examine the atrocities carried out during the Shatila and Sabra refugee camps in Western Beirut¹⁷⁵ - found Sharon to be indirectly responsible for those atrocities, following which he was compelled to resign as Defense Minister.¹⁷⁶ To be sure, Sharon was a decidedly secular Minister but, though of a different worldview than Begin, their respective convictions for the appropriate course of action vis-a-vis Lebanon - be it based on a plan to re-constitute the Middle East along new lines in the interest of national security¹⁷⁷ as was the case with Sharon, or to do so to especially establish conditions conducive to securing Israeli sovereignty over Judea and Samaria, as in Begin’s case (detailed further in chapter 4) - did not therefore necessarily clash. Following the Operation’s initial stage, the Knesset mounted increasing opposition to Israel’s invasion, which is likely to have prompted Begin’s early resignation from the post of Prime Minister.

¹⁷⁴ Schiff, Z. & Ya’ari, E. (1985) *Israel's Lebanon War*. New York: Simon and Schuster, p. 302.

¹⁷⁵ The Sabra and Shatila massacre of September 1982 refers to events in which Phalange militia - a Christian Lebanese right-wing party, with a militant wing, with which IDF collaborated during the Israeli siege of West Beirut - killed around one thousand of Palestinian civilians in West Beirut refugee camps, with the suspected complicity of the IDF.

¹⁷⁶ Shany, Y., Michaeli, K. R. (2002) *The Case Against Ariel Sharon: Revisiting The Doctrine of Command Responsibility*. *New York University Journal of International Law and Politics*. 34. 4. p. 798.

¹⁷⁷ Specifically, this refers to installing a Christian Lebanese, pro-Israeli government in Lebanon, following the destruction of PLO infrastructure throughout Lebanon, along with the Syrian forces that were aiding it militarily.

3.2 Islamic Republic of Iran

3.2.1 The socio-political landscape of Iran (ca. 1978-89)

Around the time of the Camp David Accords, and about a thousand miles further East, a revolution was unfolding across Iran, culminating in the forced departure of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi in early January 1979, which ended fifty-four years of Pahlavi dynastic rule. Public dissent in Iran had been long underway, galvanized as it was by Marxist, leftist and, most dominant, Islamic forces, all of which shared intense anti-foreign, especially anti-American, sentiment.¹⁷⁸ This was expressed in popular battle-cries such as *Khod kafa-ye*¹⁷⁹ (self-sufficiency), which referred to protesters' desire to reduce Iran's dependency on Western powers; a desire built up during a history of foreign domination and one that arguably resulted in a protruding paranoia amongst the Iranian public.¹⁸⁰ As observed by Roger Cooper, a British businessman, following his five-year imprisonment during the mid-1980s in the Iranian Evin prison on the suspicion that he was a British spy:

I think [the anti-foreign sentiment] goes back to the actually historical fact. There's no doubt that in the nineteenth century and up to the first couple of decades of the 20th century, the British on one side and Russians on the other did really control everything important in Iran. It's nothing really new that the Iranians have a dislike [...] they think that everything that happens has a British influence.

¹⁷⁸ Ironically, in hindsight, though perfectly logical within a Cold War context, Reza Mohammad Shah viewed the Marxist ideology, not the Islamic one, as the biggest threat to his regime (Dabashi, H. (2005) *Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundation of the Islamic Revolution in Iran*. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers. p. 54).

¹⁷⁹ Ehteshami, A. (2002) The foreign policy of Iran. In: Hinnebusch, R. and Ehteshami, A. (eds. *The foreign policies of Middle East States*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc. p. 285-6.

¹⁸⁰ Abrahamian, E. (1982) *Iran Between Two revolutions*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, p. 140-5.

Anti-Westernism, possibly enforced by the paranoia identified by Cooper, strengthened in the aftermath of Pahlavi's modernization and secularization efforts in the 1960s. Vehement opposition to those efforts was spearheaded by the hitherto quietist Shi'ite clergy, above all Ruhollah Khomeini, who opposed them on the grounds that they encouraged moral corruption of society and furthered Iranian dependence on Western powers and Israel. Khomeini was then "but" a respected member of the clergy, but his voice resonated widely across all sectors of Iranian society helped along by his charisma and importantly also the clergy's highly organized network of mosques and other platforms of social outreach, as well as its strong links to the *bazaaris* (merchants). Khomeini's vocal opposition and, presumably, its appeal across the country, prompted in his exile to Najaf in Iraq, and later Neauphle-le-Château in France, but that neither silenced him nor reduced his following. Quite to the contrary, Khomeini developed and lectured on Islamic Government while in Najaf, and continued reaching and galvanizing dissenting masses in Iran through his publications as well as audio messages on clandestinely smuggled cassette tapes. The Islamic ideology, undoubtedly the dominant and ultimately victorious of the revolutionary ideologies, was reflected in another popular battle cry of the revolution *Esteqlal, Azadi: Jomhuri Eslami* (Independence, Freedom: Islamic Republic), which not only called for freedom and independence, but equated this with Islamic Government.¹⁸¹

By the time of Khomeini's return to Tehran from his exile on 1 February 1979, he was received by millions of Iranians who embraced him as leader of the revolution, as well as of the Islamic Republic of Iran that was to replace the Shah's monarchical rule. This sentiment was reflected in the outcome of Iran's referendum of 30-31 March, 1979 in which 99.3% of voters said 'yes' to the creation of an Islamic Republic and, similarly, in the referendum of 2-3 December, 1979 which

¹⁸¹ Ehteshami, A. (2002) *The foreign policy of Iran*. p. 285.

ratified Iran's new Islam-based constitution, to which 99.5% of voters agreed.¹⁸² These figures are to be taken with caution, as they do not represent the voice of all Iranian constituents: some left-leaning political parties such as the National Democratic Front and the Fadaiyan Khalgh (Organization of Iranian People's Fadaian) boycotted the March referendum on the grounds that it was not an open one,¹⁸³ while another source suggests that the December 1979 referendum had only a 65% voter turn-out as a result, in large part, of the Kurdistan, Baluchistani and Azerbaijani minority regions' boycott thereof.¹⁸⁴ That said, pictures and video footage of Khomeini's return to Iran and the time that followed makes it hard to deny that he and the vision he promoted yielded widespread support.

This support, underpinned by a fiercely anti-Western and Islamic populist sentiment, would continue throughout the early stages of the Iran-Iraq war; a conflict initiated by Saddam Hussein's offensive military invasion of Iran in September 1980. However, as the war carried on, taking its toll on Iran's increasingly weak military, economy and morale, the regime's domestic support declined, as became evident in a drop of army volunteers as well as in anti-war and anti-government demonstrations. Moreover, it coincided with increasing disunity within the government, particularly amongst the conservative clerics who wanted to continue the war at all costs, and the pragmatic ones who pushed for an end to it. The latter's wish ultimately came true in August of 1988 when Khomeini accepted UN resolution 598 and, with it, agreed to withdraw to the international border between Iraq and Iran. These dire conditions were underpinned by Iran's regional and international alienation, as Arab Gulf nations which had formed the Gulf Cooperation Council in defence of the

¹⁸² Nohlen, D., Grotz, F. & Hartmann, C. (2001) *Elections in Asia: A data handbook, Volume I*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. 72.

¹⁸³ Nohlen, D., Grotz, F. & Hartmann, C. (2001) *Elections in Asia: A data handbook, Volume I*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. 72.

¹⁸⁴ PRINCETON UNIVERSITY (n.d.) Constitution Writing & Conflict Resolution. Country Reports: Iran 1979. [Online] Available from: <http://www.princeton.edu/~pcwcr/reports/iran1979.html>. Accessed: 15 January, 2014.

spread of the Islamic Revolution, aided Iraq financially, materially and diplomatically during the war, just as major international powers did.

In the aftermath of the Iran-Iraq war, pragmatists in the Iranian government were eager to re-establish relations with international allies, though much to the dismay of hardliners who vocally opposed any such moves. Various events indicate that their efforts were working, or starting to work. For example, diplomatic relations between Iran and the UK were restored in December 1978 when a new Chargé d’Affaires, Nicholas Browne, took up a diplomatic post in Tehran; and negotiation talks concerning the release of British hostages held in Lebanon by Iranian-funded Hizbollah were moving forward. In a BBC interview one of these hostages, Terry Waite, recalls that

[the capturers] moved me to [...] very nice quarters, to a private house, and they said “you’ll be going home soon”. They brought me good food, even wheeled in for the first time a video machine, and said “you can watch videos if you would like”¹⁸⁵.

Similarly, Roger Cooper, introduced above as the British business man held hostage in Iran on spying charges, recalls that his interrogators showed friendly signs and even said that they were working towards releasing him.¹⁸⁶ This rapprochement was reversed, however, following what would become known, alongside the Iran-Iraq war, as one of Khomeini’s main foreign policy moves: his *fatwa* (religious legal ruling) ordering the killing of British- and Muslim-born (but non-believing) novelist Salman Rushdie in response to the latter’s book *The Satanic Verses* (1988); a publication interpreted by many Muslim communities worldwide to be blasphemous against Islam. In the *fatwa*’s aftermath, the UK and other countries in the European Community withdrew their

¹⁸⁵ British Broadcasting Corporation. 2009. *The Satanic Verses Affair* [Online] [Accessed: 5 January, 2013] Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89ADjzVKKXw>. 0:33:40 – 0:34:10 mins.

¹⁸⁶ Pipes, D. (2003) *The Rushdie Affair: the novel, the Ayatollah and the West*. 2nd Edition. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers. p. 29

ambassadors from Iran; Hizbollah-held British hostages were re-placed into hostile conditions; and Roger Cooper was sentenced to death plus ten years.

The effect of Khomeini's *fatwa* on Muslims was immense: it instigated condemnation and massive protests domestically, regionally and internationally. In Iran, 3000 demonstrators assembled by the British embassy in Tehran to hear politicians call the UK "the enemy of the Qur'an and Islam and the manifestation of all things evil",¹⁸⁷ and, in a separate incident, the head of an Iranian charity organisation, 15th Khordad Relief Agency, offered a financial reward to anyone, Iranian or non-Iranian, for the murder of Rushdie. Regionally, Hizbollah leaders "promised to do 'all that's possible to have the honour' of carrying out Khomeini's death sentence."¹⁸⁸ Various Lebanese groups also supported Khomeini's sentence including the largest Shi'i groups, Amal, and the Sunni organisation, Islamic Unification Movement (the latter indicates support for Khomeini from an Islamic, not only a Shi'ite, base). A number of Palestinian groups, such as Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine and Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, joined these efforts as well. Even those who did not agree with Khomeini's verdict, supported it, as one British Muslim explained: "many Muslims didn't agree with the fatwa [but] if you disagreed with the fatwa it was as if you disagreed with the Prophet himself and your faith would be lacking".¹⁸⁹ Khomeini died in early June of 1989; long before the aggression against Rushdie would ease and even longer before the *fatwa* against Rushdie would become withdrawn by the reformist Iranian president, Mohammad Khatami, in 1998.

¹⁸⁷ Pipes, D. (2003) *The Rushdie Affair: the novel, the Ayatollah and the West*. 2nd edition. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers. p. 29.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid. p.30.

¹⁸⁹ British Broadcasting Corporation. 2009. *The Satanic Verses Affair* [Online] [Accessed: 5 January, 2013] Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89ADjzZVKXw>. 0:40-00:41 mins.

3.2.2 Ayatollah Khomeini's decision making environment

The Islamic Republic of Iran's political system is notoriously complex. At no point has this held more true than in the decade following the Islamic Revolution, a period characterised by factionalism between and within liberal and clerical parties. While a myriad of voices, belonging primarily to conservative clerics, found expression through their dominant role in the Council of Guardians, Ayatollah Khomeini, throughout this time, remained the undisputed authority on all matters domestic and foreign. This authority was vested in him by the Islamic Republic's constitution of 1979, awarding him the role of *faqih* (leading jurist) and, more generally, implemented as system of governance *velayat-e faqih* (governance of the jurist), a form of Islamic government conceptualized by Khomeini himself during his exile in the decades leading up to the revolution. As the case study in chapter 5 will detail, this manifested in a foreign policy concerned, above all, with fierce anti-Westernism, consolidation of the Islamic Republic and, spreading of the Islamic Revolution.

Islamic Government

As “supreme decision maker”,¹⁹⁰ of the Islamic Republic, Khomeini “wielded undisputed power”,¹⁹¹ counting the authority to determine “general policies” and exercise “supreme command” of the armed forces, amongst his prerogatives.¹⁸⁴ Khomeini's authority did not follow naturally from his role as leader of the Islamic Revolution. It was derived following intense debate between liberal and clerical forces about the nature of Iran's post-Pahlavian government; specifically, whether the latter was to be shaped according to republican or Islamic principles which respectively upheld a supreme and supervisory role of the *faqih*.¹⁹² Ramazani (1989) and others distinguishes

¹⁹⁰ U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE (1980) *Memorandum: Iran's Foreign Policy*. Available from: www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA100690 [Accessed: 1 February, 2014]

¹⁹¹ Mozaffari, M. (1993) Changes in the Iranian Political System after Khomeini's death. *Political Studies*. XLI. p. 612.

¹⁹² Moslem, M. (2002) *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press. p. 19-21.

these blocs as “Iran firsters” and “Islam firsters”.¹⁹³ The former were generally at a disadvantage in this period, due to the overwhelming anti-Western sentiment that was present throughout Iran, fostering, as it did, a to dislike (and distrust) of institutions from the old regime and, more generally, delegitimized attempts run the country in “an organized, controlled manner.”¹⁹⁴ Despite their lack of a clear idea about the details of their rule, “Islam firsters” found themselves in an environment conducive to their general conservative preferences and the constitution, ratified in December 1979, institutionalized *velayat-e faqih* (guardianship of the jurist). The latter, a type of Islamic government conceptualized by Khomeini in the decades leading up to the revolution, entrusted the *faqih* with veto power over all government laws and decisions for the duration of the twelfth imam’s occultation, and laid Shari’a law as the basis for the country’s legal system. A number of bodies were created to uphold the regime’s “Islamicity” both politically and publicly. Most powerful amongst them was the *Showra-ye Negahba* (Council of Guardians), a non-elected body comprised of six theologians and six civilian jurists, whose significant privileges included authority to veto interpretations of the constitution and supervise elections to the presidency and *Majlis* (parliament) as well as approving legislation passed by the latter to ensure its “Islamicity”.¹⁹⁵

Factionalism

Following the victory of “Islam firsters” and the subsequent institutionalization of clerical power, factional rivalry between the liberal and clerical camp voices changed into rivalry *within* the clerical camp, played out between what Moslem (2002) characterizes as the “conservative right” (henceforth, Conservatives) and “radical left” (henceforth, Radicals). The former argued for

¹⁹³ Ramazani, R. K. (1989) Iran’s Foreign Policy: Contending Orientations. *Middle East Journal*. 43 (2). p. 207-8.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid. p. 22-30, 60-2.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid. p. 60-62.

private property, containment the Islamic Revolution within Iran and, importantly, promoted a strict interpretation of Shari'a law, to be based only on primary ordinances in the form of the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* (verbally transmitted records of the Prophet Muhammad's teachings), from which jurists could deviate only in exceptional circumstances. This clashed with the Radicals' support for state-sponsored egalitarian policies, export of the Revolution and, more fundamentally, their dynamic interpretation of Shari'a which allowed for secondary ordinances developed according to social and political issues of the day. The rivalry between these camps was fought out between the Conservative-dominated Council of Guardians and parliament which comprised both Conservatives and Radicals. Given the power inequalities between those two bodies, the Council would seek to manifest its power through, e.g., principled rejections of laws that it deemed un-Islamic.¹⁹⁶

However, as the constitution would have it, Khomeini was tasked with settling disputes and giving ultimate verdicts; a task which he, by all accounts, approached with a dual containment policy whereby he would alternate between his endorsement of both camps, for the sake of consolidating the Islamic Republic. As early as 1981, however, it was suggested that the Ayatollah's approach to policy-making lay in line with the Radical camp's dynamic interpretation of Shari'a. In August of that year, the *Majlis* (parliament) passed a land reform law to redistribute land amongst peasant citizens, a move that was rejected by the Conservative-dominated Guardian Council on the grounds that it contradicted the Qur'anic verse "Muslims have mandate over their possession". Following Khomeini's intervention, and his first secondary ordinance, the land reform law was approved by the Council of Guardians. Towards the end of the Islamic Republic first decade, and Khomeini's life, the Ayatollah's adoption of preference for *maslahat* (expediency), had been confirmed on

¹⁹⁶ Ibid. p. 60-62.

numerous occasions, most prominently with his decision to terminate the Iran-Iraq war in 1988 in the face of fierce opposition from Conservatives in the Guardian Council and beyond.¹⁹⁷

Towards the end of the Iran-Iraq war, with domestic discontent and economic woes at their peak, Khomeini's support of the Radicals and their dynamic interpretive methods manifested nowhere more clearly than in his commission of a 13-member Review Council to oversee decisions of the Guardian Council 'in the interest of the Islamic Country', effectively undermining the power of Conservatives.¹⁹⁸ Following Khomeini's death in June of 1989, a new constitution diluted the extreme centralization of authority in the hands of the *faqih*, awarding more powers to the President. In the words of Mozafari (1993), the constitution instigated a change from "paternalism" to "presidentialism".¹⁹⁹ The political system of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the late twentieth and beyond thus looked and looks significantly different, although the overall form of governance, *velayat-e faqih*, remains intact forming what Maloney (2002) describes as "a modern theocracy".²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ Rakel, E. P. (2007) Iranian Foreign Policy since the Iranian Islamic Revolution: 1979-2006, *Perspectives of Global Development and Technology*. 6. p. 166-9 and Ramazani, R. K. (1989) Iran's Foreign Policy: Contending Orientations, *Middle East Journal*, 43 (2). p. 208-11.

¹⁹⁸ Ramazani, R. K. (1989), Iran's Foreign Policy: Contending Orientations, *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 43, No. 2, p. 202-217.

¹⁹⁹ Mozaffari, M. (1993) *Changes in the Iranian Political System after Khomeini's death*. p. 612.

²⁰⁰ Maloney, S. (2002) Identity and Change in Iran's Foreign Policy. In: Telhami, S. and Barnett, M. N. (2002) *Identity and Foreign Policy in the Middle East*. New York: Cornell University Press. p. 113. See also Amuzegar, J. (1993) The Truth and Illusion of Islamic Fundamentalism. *SAIS Review*. 13 (2). p. 127.

3.3 Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

3.3.1 The socio-political landscape of Saudi Arabia (ca. 1982-92)

Across the Persian Gulf, Saudi Arabia was not immune to the effects of regional ideological trends and events. Iran's Islamic Revolution galvanized Shi'ite elements in the Kingdom's Eastern province, near the oil fields, prompting Saudi police to arrest and interrogate those who they identified as pro-Khomeini activists.²⁰¹ Also from within Saudi Arabia's native, Sunni population did religious fervour increase; a development that many might consider surprising, given the Kingdom's Shari'a-based legal system and the religiously conservative society that it fosters. Most conspicuously, this manifested in the insurgency of a group of religious extremists who, on 20 November, 1979 seized the Grand Mosque in Mecca in opposition to the Ulema's relationship with a corrupt and Westernized monarchy. Though most of the Saudi populace opposed this action on the basis that it was "doctrinally illegitimate", it did not oppose the extremists' demand for a more puritanical society; this was evident, for example, in male students' appearance which increasingly incorporated short hair and long beards, both symbols of piety for Muslim men.²⁰² Following permission from the Kingdom's *Ulema* (Islamic clergy) to use violence in a Holy territory, the extremists were killed by Saudi security forces on 4 December 1979, and the Grand Mosque seizure terminated. But, as Saudi Arabian Columnist, Dr. Sulaiman Al Hattlan, observes, their wish was granted posthumously:

————— We killed the extremists of 1979, but later on - a few months after we killed them - we adopted their ideology. We gave them what they wanted when they were alive. So, in every level of the society - I am talking about the

²⁰¹ Cooley, K. (1978-9) Iran, the Palestinians, and the Gulf. *Foreign Affairs*. p. 1020.

²⁰² Ochsenwald, W. (1981) Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Revival. *Middle Eastern Studies*. p. 271-6.

educational system; I am talking about the media discourse; I am talking about the relationship between the government and the people; I am talking about even the relationship between the people and the people. We started competing on how to appear more conservative, just to protect our reputation and to protect sometimes our safety. We had to pretend we were something that we actually were not.²⁰³

Indeed, the growing trend of religiosity in the Kingdom was responded to by the government through stricter laws of society, including forbidding female singers on television and (further) censoring of TV shows. Moreover, and despite a declining Saudi economy due to decreased oil revenue, vast amounts of government money was invested in religious education, including theological schools with the purpose of training future clerics. Internationally, too, the Kingdom increased its donations to Islamic causes: in 1981, for example, Saudi Arabia contributed \$35 million above its membership due, to the various institutions of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.²⁰⁴ Upon becoming King in 1982, Crown Prince Fahd even assumed the official title “Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques” (referring to guardianship of *Al Masjid al Haram* (the Grand Mosque) in Mecca and *Al Masjid an-Nabawi* (the Prophet’s Mosque), the two holiest mosques in Islam).

In terms of foreign policy, Fahd joined, albeit reluctantly, other Arab leaders in expelling Egypt from the Arab League, following the Camp David Accords that occurred around this time, which were a source of enagement for Arabs and Muslims in the region. The Arab-Israeli conflict was no

²⁰³ Frontline (2005) House of Saud. [Online] [Accessed: 15 February, 2015]. Available from: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/saud/etc/excerpt_hi.html. 1:10:32 - 1:11:11 mins.

²⁰⁴ Piscatori, J. (2011), Religion and realpolitik: Islamic responses to the Gulf War. In *Political Islam: A Critical Reader*, ed. Frederic Volpi. New York: Routledge, p. 98-100.

longer an *Arab* issue; if it had not been so before, it became an *Islamic* issue following Khomeini's public assurance to Arafat that "Iran's revolution would not be complete until the Palestinians won theirs", as well as his invitation for the PLO to install its mission in the former Israeli embassy in Tehran.²⁰⁵ Such rallying cries from Khomeini did more than challenge Fahd's leadership role of the Islamic world, which he and his predecessors had bestowed upon them due to their guardianship of Islam's holy sites in Mecca and Medina; it galvanized Palestinians living in Saudi Arabia. Although the Kingdom's Palestinian population numbered only around 110,000 people²⁰⁶ of the Kingdom's roughly ten million citizens, it comprised a significant 60-65% of the ARAMCO compound's workforce in the late 1970s. Despite their integration into the local economy, those Palestinians were strongly attached to the idea of a Palestinian homeland. Cooley (1978-79) shows, with reference to his interview with the former Saudi Petroleum Minister, Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani, how the Saudis' perceived security implications for Saudi Arabia, of a regional war incited by escalation of hostilities in the Israeli-Palestinian conference. In his interview with Yamani, Cooley was told "[...] You know about the Palestinians and the other foreigners we have around us. Even if we deployed the entire Saudi army and national guard around the oil fields, we could not prevent sabotage by [...] trained and determined professional saboteurs."²⁰⁷ As though to consolidate this existing fear, Faruq al-Qaddumi of the PLO is rumored to have "warned [Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister, Prince Saud al-Faisal] of the vulnerability of the Saudi oil fields, and also of the Islamic holy places, in case of general hostilities on the Middle East."²⁰¹

Domestic and regional ideological trends were relegated to a concern of secondary stature in early August of 1990, when Saddam Hussein's army invaded neighbouring Kuwait; an offense that

²⁰⁵ Cooley, K. (1978-9) *Iran, the Palestinians, and the Gulf*. p. 1017.

²⁰⁶ Some sources suggest that the number was closer to 200,000. See i.e. Quandt, W. (1981) *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s: Foreign Policy, Security and Oil*. Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution. p. 32.

²⁰⁷ Cooley, K. (1978-9) *Iran, the Palestinians, and the Gulf*. p. 1027.

instantly prompted Fahd to invite US troops to defend his Kingdom. “Operation Desert Shield”, as this move was codenamed, was successful in doing so; as was the combat phase, “Operation Desert Storm” which succeeded resulted in Iraq’s withdrawal from Kuwait. Both operations were devastating for the Saudi regime’s legitimacy at home, however. Whereas Saudi-Western relations had hitherto been framed as a necessary co-operation that facilitated import of technology and expertise, the regime’s lacking defence capabilities in the face of Iraqi threats, now highlighted its dependency on the West. This severely undermined a regime whose legitimacy had rested on the ideology that it was the rightful defendant of the land of Islam. The kingdom’s dependency on the West for external security furthermore highlighted its mismanagement of funds spent on military equipment that, as it happened, did not serve its purpose. Altogether, this delegitimization of the regime gave rise to two strands of opposition: a secular-liberal opposition which pushed for political process through a petition of December 1990, signed by public figures, businessmen, writers and journalists; and, a religious opposition emanating from a segment of the *Ulema* who called for greater adherence to Sharia law through their own petition of February 1991, signed by the head of the *Ulema*, the spokesman of official Islam in the country, various judges, professors and teachers.²⁰⁸ Moreover, the latter was decidedly opposed, not only to the regime’s hosting of foreign troops, which they referred to as “an alignment of the Kingdom and the enemies of God”²⁰⁹ and an ‘illegitimate [alliance]’;²¹⁰ but to part of the *Ulema* which had accepted and legitimized, in the form of a *fatwa*, the regime’s decision to invite US troops into the Kingdom. Indeed, it was arguably Fahd’s decision to facilitate Operation Desert Shield that mobilized a lingering Islamist trend which led to the terrorist attacks on American targets in Riyadh and Khobar in November

²⁰⁸ al-Rasheed, M. (1996) God, the King and the Nation: Saudi Arabia in the 1990s, *Middle East Journal*. 50 (3). p. 361-3.

²⁰⁹ Frontline (2005) House of Saud. [Online] [Accessed: 15 February, 2015]. Available from: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/saud/etc/excerpt_hi.html. 00:55-00:56:30 mins.

²¹⁰ Alianak, S. (2007) *Middle Eastern Leaders and Islam: A Precarious Equilibrium*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc. p. 82.

1995 and June 1996, respectively. Osama bin Laden, who led both of those terrorist acts, wrote in “An Open Letter to King Fahd” that the attacks were a response to Fahd’s foreign policy, and criticized both the Saudi Arabian government’s foreign policy as well as the *Ulema* for issuing *fatwas* that legitimized it. Bin Laden concluded the letter with his verdict that Fahd’s regime was un-Islamic and called for the King’s resignation.²¹¹

3.3.2. Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud’s decision making environment

Saudi Arabia is an absolute monarchy, in which neither elections nor political parties are allowed.²¹² Unlike Begin’s Israel and Khomeini’s Iran, however, its foreign policy decision making structure and processes are, in the absence of a strong King, relatively diffused in that the latter necessitates approval from senior members of the royal family to implement foreign policy decisions. Due to the weak leadership of King Khalid (1975-82), Crown Prince Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud was the Kingdom’s highest *de-facto* authority under Khalid’s reign until his accession to the throne in 1982, after which he became so officially. Characteristic of Saudi foreign policy decision making is that, in times of crises, the decision making circle is brought together around the King’s policy, which, as chapter 6 will detail, meant unanimous support for Fahd’s decision to invite US troops to the Kingdom in the context of the 1990-91 Gulf War. While Saudi Arabia’s *ulema* (religious establishment) does not have any direct influence on the Kingdom’s foreign policy decision making, its preferences, particularly those related to Arab and Islamic affairs at home and abroad, must necessarily be accommodated. The *ulema*’s leverage derives from the crucial role that it has played historically in legitimizing Al Saud’s dynastic rule, in exchange for the latter’s implementation of Islamic governance in its Wahhabi variant. In this sense, King Fahd and his inner

²¹¹ Ibid. p. 83.

²¹² Altoriafi, A. (2012) Understanding the Role of State Identity in Foreign Policy Decision-Making: The Rise and Demise of Saudi-Iranian Rapprochement (1997-2009). PhD Thesis, London School of Economics. p. 194.

circle, and indeed the Saudi leadership across time, was confined, however informally, by a relatively rigid Saudi identity intricately tied to Islam.

The King and Senior Princes

Under the reign of King Khalid (1957-82), whose non-political persona and poor health rendered him a weak leader, Crown Prince Fahd was, by all accounts, the *de-facto* ruler of Saudi Arabia.²¹³ He has been described as the “most important single figure in shaping Saudi foreign policy” and “the kingdom’s strongman” of this period, before becoming the official ruler - or, King - following Khalid’s death in 1982.²¹⁴ Although dominating the decision making process, Fahd shared his mandate with a group of senior princes, as is customary in the Kingdom due to the leader’s need to maintain legitimacy around his person in the eyes of the royal family.²¹⁵ Prominent in Fahd’s circle was Prince, later Crown Prince, and Head of the National Guard, Abdullah, Prince and Foreign Minister Saud Al-Faisal, and Prince and Defence Minister Sultan. Although their primary concern laid with Syria and Yemen, respectively, both Abdullah and Saud Al-Faisal were concerned with the Arab-Israeli conflict.²¹⁶ Abdullah was vehemently critical of US-foreign policy vis-a-vis the Palestinian question, and Al-Faisal emphasized centrality of Palestinian issues in Arab-Israeli conflict. This differed from Fahd’s own view, which has generally been characterized as “pro-American” and “centrist” in an inter-Arab context which, as the case study in chapter 6 will show, meant that he was less anti-Egyptian than most Saudis and indeed influential senior princes.

²¹³ See i.e. Quandt, W. B. (1981) *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution. p. 83 and Aarts, P. and Nonneman, G. (eds.) (2005) *Saudi Arabia in the Balance: Political Economy, Society, Foreign Affairs*. London: Hurst & Company Publishers Ltd. p. 335.

²¹⁴ Quandt, W. B. (1981) *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s*. p. 83.

²¹⁵ Altoriafi, A. (2012) *Understanding the Role of State Identity in Foreign Policy Decision-Making: The Rise and Demise of Saudi-Iranian Rapprochement (1997-2009)*. p. 196. This legitimacy is also necessary in the eyes of the *Ulema* (discussed below).

²¹⁶ Princes typically have “personal ownership”²¹⁶ over specific relationships with foreign states. Aarts, P. and Nonneman, G. (eds.) (2005) *Saudi Arabia in the Balance: Political Economy, Society, Foreign Affairs*. London: Hurst & Company Publishers Ltd. p. 335-6.

Decision making amongst the highest authorities of the Saudi royal family is “shrouded in secrecy”²¹⁷ and depends largely on intra-family dynamics and politics. As such it is difficult to ascertain precisely how policy on the Israeli-Palestinian question came to be. However, as will be discussed in chapter 6, it is likely that the pro-Palestinian sentiment amongst his aides, coupled with that of the *Ulema* as well as public opinion more broadly, shaped Fahd’s foreign policy vis-a-vis this issue²¹⁸. This would furthermore be in line with the trend for the royal family to reach a consensus on policy matters, on the grounds that such a position minimizes risks of delegitimization that come from revealing disunity or disagreements within the family. This is especially so in the times of crisis, when princes tend to band together and abandon their differences, as was the case during Fahd’s decision to invite US troops to the Kingdom during Operations Desert Shield and Storm.²¹⁹ Upon Fahd’s announcement of this decision in August 1990, five (and probably more) of the people in the room were ruling family members.²²⁰ Had there been major disagreements between them, this would have been reflected in the Kingdom’s foreign policy; a scenario that has only been seen during King Saud’s vehement disagreement with Crown Prince Faisal over the adequate policy vis-a-vis Nasserist Egypt, which resulted in a contradictory foreign policy of confrontation and appeasement, and eventually leading to King Saud’s deposition.²²¹

The roles of government officials like technocrats as well as government bodies like the Consultative Council and Council of Ministers, in foreign policy decision making is limited to advisory ones, at best, except where members are royal and/or amongst the senior Princes, as was

²¹⁷ Quandt, W. B. (1981) *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution. p. 79.

²¹⁸ Gause III, G. F. (2002) The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia. In: Hinnebusch, R. and Ehteshami, A. (eds.) *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc. p. 204.

²¹⁹ Aarts, P. and Nonneman, G. (eds.) (2005) *Saudi Arabia in the Balance: Political Economy, Society, Foreign Affairs*. p. 337-9.

²²⁰ Gause III, G. F. (2002) The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia. p. 204.

²²¹ *Ibid.* p. 204-5.

the case with Abdullah, al-Faisal and Sultan.²²² Despite what has become a complex and large bureaucracy, decision making is centralized amongst a handful of royals who, as the section below details, nonetheless operate within the important context of a religio-political symbiosis between the Al Saud family, on the one hand, and the religious establishment, on the other.

The Ulema

By all accounts, the *ulema* does not, despite its representation in government, have a decisive voice in the Kingdom's foreign policy decision making process.²²³ Such a role is largely confined to the domestic sphere where it staunchly ensures that social and legal codes are in line with Shari'a law, and controls the content of Friday sermons and public fora.²²⁴ Indeed, as Gause III (2003) notes, a foreign policy decision has never been repealed due to opposition from the *Ulema*.²²⁵ Rather than having a decisive role, the *Ulema* is thought to "influence [foreign policy] to various degrees"²²⁶ by, for example, holding regular Thursday meetings with the King to "exchange views and coordinate policy"²²⁷ and, importantly, by its ability to give or withhold support for a given foreign policy and thereby legitimize, or not, the King and his fellow decision makers. Legitimization in the form of the *Ulema*'s approval is of critical importance for the royal family as the latter's survival as a ruling body is largely dependent upon it. The *Ulema*, in turn, depends on the royal family's institutional

²²² Aarts, P. and Nonneman, G. (eds.) (2005) *Saudi Arabia in the Balance: Political Economy, Society, Foreign Affairs*. p. 336-7.

²²³ Quandt, W. B. (1981) *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s*. p. 88 and Aarts, P. and Nonneman, G. (eds.) *Saudi Arabia in the Balance: Political Economy, Society, Foreign Affairs*. p. 336.

²²⁴ Quandt, W. B. (1981) *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s*. p. 88. So strong is its power vis-a-vis the domestic sphere, that the Kingdom's founder, Ibn Saud, necessitated the *Ulema*'s approval before introducing Western technology to the country, just as he cancelled the planned jubilee celebrations to mark the Al Saud dynasty's capture of Riyadh following the *Ulema*'s verdict that the former were un-Islamic. Or, more recently, when King Khalid was made to await the *Ulema*'s *fatwa* before using force against the dissidents behind the Grand Mosque attack in 1979, and indeed the contingency of Khalid's ascension to King, on the *Ulema*'s approving voice. (Korany, B. (1984) *Defending the Faith: the Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia*. In Korany, B. and Dessouki, A. E. H. (1984) *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press. p. 260.)

²²⁵ Gause III, G. F. (2002) *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia*. p. 205.

²²⁶ Aarts, P. and Nonneman, G. (eds.) *Saudi Arabia in the Balance: Political Economy, Society, Foreign Affairs*. p. 336

²²⁷ Korany, B. (1984) *Defending the Faith: the Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia*. p. 261.

protection and financial support for its own subsistence. This religio-politico symbiosis dates back to the mid-seventeenth century, when the dynasty's founding father, Muhammad Ibn al-Saud, and the founder of the Wahhabi movement, Muhammad Ibn Abd Al Wahhab, struck an "legitimacy-for-protection" agreement.²²⁸ Upon meeting, Al Saud, then ruler of the town of Diriyah, is said to have told Al Wahhab, who was at odds with local rulers of the Nejd region,²²⁹ that "this oasis is yours, do not fear your enemies. By the name of God, if all Nejd was summoned to throw you out, we will never agree to expel you,"²³⁰ to which Al Wahhab replied that "[...] I want you to grant me an oath that you will perform jihad against the unbelievers. In return you will be *Imam*, leader of the Muslim community and I will be leader in religious matters."²³¹

As such, the two leaders effectively put in place a power-sharing agreement by which Al Wahhab and his followers were promised both protection and a society led according to Islamic values, while Al Saud was granted the religious legitimacy necessary for his recognition as the effective ruler of the Saudi state.²³² Specifically, the legitimacy allowed Al Saud to unify, in the name of religion, his sources of support that were otherwise separated according to tribal loyalties and traditional leaderships.²³³ The Saudi state founded by Al Saud fell twice; during the Ottoman-Wahhabi war of 1811-1818, and again during the civil war between quarreling tribes of the Asir and Riyadh regions in 1880. When re-established by Ibn Saud in 1932, the success of the new state was

²²⁸ I-Rasheed, M. (2010) *A History of Saudi Arabia*, 2nd edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 16

²²⁹ Al Wahhab's interpretation of the Islamic doctrine held that religious, social and political customs should be conducted as in the seventh century by the Prophet Muhammad and his followers. He promoted the idea that no mediating force should come between God and human and thus encouraged the destruction of many worshipping places which, in turn, led local leaders to view him as a disturbance to peace and stability. He was expelled from various places, and his life threatened. M. al-Rasheed (2010) *A History of Saudi Arabia*, 2nd edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 16.

²³⁰ al-Rasheed, M. (2010) *A History of Saudi Arabia*, 2nd edition. p. 16.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Ochsenswald, W. (1981) Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Revival. *Middle East Studies*, 12 (3). p. 273.

²³³ Nevo, J. Religion and National Identity in Saudi Arabia. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 34 (3), 1998. p. 37.

determined, as had been the case centuries prior, by the Wahhabi-Saud alliance. The politico-religious symbiosis has been essential to the consolidation of the Saudi nation ever since.

For a crisis situation like that faced by Fahd when inviting U.S. troops to Saudi Arabia to fight against Iraq, this symbiosis meant that the regime turned to the *Ulema*, albeit post-facto, to justify its decision, so that a *fatwa* may be released in support of the latter.²³⁴ For non-crisis situations, especially those with a decidedly Islamic dimension, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the King and his advisors, are generally seen to deviate less, at least conspicuously, from the *Ulema*'s well-known anti-Israeli line.

3.4 Conclusion

As the chapter has shown, Begin, Khomeini and Fahd led their respective countries during a period when religious ideologies and sentiment were rife within their borders and across the Middle East region. Moreover, it has shown that all three leaders could operate with disproportionate autonomy over matters of foreign policy, either by way of constitutional design as in the case of Khomeini and Fahd, or a forceful personality, in the case of Begin. The latter does not imply that the leaders were above the influence of government dynamics, public opinion or, the *Ulema*, in the case of Saudi Arabia; as the methodology section of the thesis' introductory chapter pointed out, these factors are therefore accounted for, where relevant, in the case study analysis. The following three chapters ~~comprise the case study~~ analysis of Israel, Iran and Saudi Arabia, each of them discussing first the worldview of Begin, Khomeini and Fahd, respectively, with reference to those leaders' "faith" and "belief-communities" before they proceed to looking at how the "religious beliefs" reflect in their foreign policy outcomes and, especially, the leaders' discourse surrounding those outcomes. For

²³⁴ Gause III, G. F. (2002) *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia*. p. 205.

Begin's Israel, the foreign policies include the Camp David Accords and Operation Peace for Galilee; for Iran, Khomeini's policy vis-a-vis the Iran-Iraq War and his *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie; and for Saudi Arabia, Fahd's policy vis-a-vis the Arab-Israeli conflict and Operation Desert Shield and Storm.

CHAPTER 4

RELIGION AND FOREIGN POLICY IN ISRAEL

UNDER MENACHEM BEGIN (1977-84)

The Bible is a living document – eternally living document. We live on this Book, with this Book – forever. And my predecessor of blessed memory, the late Mr. Ben-Gurion, aptly expressed himself when he said, ‘Some people say that the British Mandate is our Bible. It is untrue’ he said. ‘The Bible is our mandate!’ Yes, Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip are integral parts of Eretz Yisrael [...]

- Menachem Begin’s address to Jewish Leaders in New York, September 20, 1978.²³⁵

4.0 Introduction

Menachem Begin was never one to shy away from speaking candidly in public and the quote above is but one of many examples in which he speaks his mind on the matter that was, by his own account and the accounts of many others, nearest and dearest to his heart: *Eretz Yisrael* (Land of Israel). More specifically, Begin was concerned with the return to *Eretz Yisrael* of the Jewish people and the latter’s expected redemption which, he held, would occur as a result thereof. In this chapter, I argue, and show, that Begin’s religious beliefs - that is, the combination of his individual “faith” and the shared faith of his neo-revisionist “belief-community” (discussed further on pp. 113-14) shaped his worldview, which apart from comprising an ardent insistence on the Jewish return (or continued presence, depending on the time period discussed) on the Land of Israel in its entirety,

²³⁵ Hurwitz, H. & Medad, Y. (eds.) (2011) Begin addresses Jewish Leaders in New York, September 20, 1978. In: *Peace in the Making: The Menachem Begin-Anwar El-Sadat Personal Correspondence*. Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House in cooperation with the Menachem Begin Heritage Centre. p. 88.

also comprised a pervasive perception of an inherent anti-Semitism on the part of Arabs and, especially, the PLO. In the same context, I furthermore argue that, by way of forming part of his worldview, and by extension also his foreign policy doctrine, Begin's religious beliefs shaped two of his most important foreign policy outcomes: the Camp David Accords and Operation Peace for Galilee.²³⁶ To be sure, I do not identify religion as an independent variable, but acknowledge, and account for it as one which interplays with other important factors, above all, historical ones. That interplay notwithstanding, I show that the relationship between Begin's religious beliefs and his policy vis-a-vis Judea, Samaria and Gaza, in the context of Framework I of the Camp David Accords was particularly strong; explicit, in fact. The relationship between Begin's religious beliefs and the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty and Operation Peace for Galilee was notably an indirect one, but an important one nonetheless as Begin's intention to establish full, contractual peace with both Egypt and Lebanon can only be understood in the context of his insistence of the Jewish people's sovereignty over *Eretz Yisrael*.

With reference to various excerpts of Begin's discourse, I furthermore argue that a second role of religion in Begin's foreign policy, is one of legitimization. Specifically, I show how Begin invokes religious references at times when he is faced with mounting public opposition, whether from a minority movement like Gush Emunim or broader public opposition as during Operation Peace for Galilee. Given Begin's candid personality, and the malleability of religious beliefs, I do not *necessarily* discard his religious references as disingenuous and, but rather suggest that they may be a means to legitimize his foreign policy to the public *as well as* to himself; this discussion and that of religion's role as one which shapes Begin's worldview, foreign policy doctrine and foreign policy outcomes, is taken up in the chapter's conclusion. It follows a section on the religious dimension of

²³⁶ Along with his Operation Peace for Galilee and insistence of sovereignty over *Eretz Yisrael*, Begin's foreign policy was also defined by his authorization to bomb an Iraqi nuclear reactor under construction, or Operation Babylon, on 7 June, 1981. The chapter does not discuss the latter, as preliminary research shows that religious discourse featured very little, if at all, whether publicly or privately, in Begin's discussion of the Operation.

Begin's worldview (4.1), the latter's reflection in his foreign policy doctrine (4.2) and two sections on the Camp David Accords (4.3) and Operation Peace for Galilee (4.4), respectively.

4.1 Begin's world-view

Begin's "faith"

In the words of Begin's longtime friend and advisor, Harry Hurwitz, Menachem was "above all, [...] a man of immense and supreme faith",²³⁷ whose constant prayer was "*Be'ezrat Hashem* - with the help of the Almighty."²³⁸ His biographer Avi Shilon makes a similar observation, writing that,

When [Begin] came to power, it became apparent that expressions such as "Be'ezrat Hashem", [which] riddled his speech, were not merely an affection, but a genuine part of his world outlook [...] His faith in God was evident in everything he did.²³⁹

His colleague during the Camp David Accords, U.S. President Jimmy Carter, writes along the same lines that Begin's "deep and unswerving religious commitments [had] always been a guiding factor in his consciousness and in his pursuit of unswerving goals."²⁴⁰ Scholars dedicated to studying the life and political behaviour of Begin have reached similar conclusions. Amongst them, Dr. Arnon Lammfrom from the Israeli State Archives, who, when I asked him about Begin's faith during my visit to the archives, replied that, "although Begin was not religious in an explicit way [as] he was not a Rabbi; his soul was religious."²⁴¹ Begin's personal reflections on his relationship with God tell

²³⁷ Hurwitz, H. (1977) *Menachem Begin*, Johannesburg: The Jewish Herald Pty. Ltd. p. 38

²³⁸ Ibid. p. 4.

²³⁹ Shilon, A. (2012) *Menachem Begin: A life*. New Haven: Yale University Press. p. 266.

²⁴⁰ THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY PROJECT (n.d.) Visit of Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel Remarks of the President and the Prime Minister at the Welcoming Ceremony. [Online]. Available from: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=7825>. [Accessed: 1 December, 2013].

²⁴¹ Lammfrom, A. (2013) Interviewed by Magdalena C. Delgado. In Jerusalem, Israel. July 10, 2013.

a similar story. In his autobiographical memoir, *White Nights: the Story of a Prisoner in Russia*, for example, Begin included references such as “[I] said a silent prayer of thanksgiving”,²⁴² “I prayed to God to help me in my hour of need”²⁴³ and “We chatted, studied, played, thought, prayed.”²⁴⁴ Most telling of all, perhaps, Begin recalls the following conversation between himself and an interrogator during his imprisonment in a Russian labour camp in the 1940s:

Begin: “With the help of God [...] I will perhaps still work for my people.”

Interrogator: “God? Do you believe in God?”

Begin: “Yes, of course I believe in God”.

Interrogator: “I see that in this sphere too you will need re-education. But I must say I didn’t expect to hear such nonsense from you, Menachem Wolfowitz. After all you are an educated man. How can you believe in God?”

Begin: “I have seen university professors who believe in God. There have been great scientists who believed in God.”

Interrogator: “Nonsense! A scientist can’t believe in God. Those that you are referring to only said they believe. They were in the pay of the bourgeoisie. Incidentally, can you tell me why you believe in God?”

Begin: “It’s very hard to explain, Citizen-Judge. Faith is not a thing that one can explain rationally.”

²⁴² Begin, M. (2008) *White Nights*. 2nd edition. Location Unknown: Steimatzky. p. 104.

²⁴³ *Ibid.* p. 136.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p. 188.

Interrogator: “Are there things that the mind cannot grasp? There are no such things! An answer can be found to everything in science.”

Begin: “Faith does not stand in contradiction to human intelligence; but man, in his intelligence, understands that there are things he cannot fathom by rationality, and so he believes in a Higher Power.”²⁴⁵

Begin’s faith did not so much exist in isolation as it did as an important constitutive part of what Peleg (1987) refers to as the “neo-revisionist” ideology, where it intricately interplayed with nationalist and historical elements.²⁴⁶ The neo-revisionist ideology - what I argue in this chapter comprises Begin’s “belief-community” - was spearheaded by Begin himself but comprising a broad political leadership and, as we saw in chapter 3, even broader public support amongst especially religious constituents in Israel since the early 1970s. It developed from Ze’ev Jabotinsky’s Revisionist Zionism of the 1920s and 1930s, and shared with the latter the position that Jews should establish a powerful state in their national home on *Eretz Yisrael* (Land of Israel), through the use of force as this was deemed the only viable way of tackling hatred against Jews.²⁴⁷ Begin’s neo-revisionism, while comprising the same goals and preferred militant tactics as Jabotinsky’s Revisionism, was an emotionalized variant thereof. It was developed around the notion that a return to *Eretz Yisrael* would ultimately bring about the Jewish people’s redemption which had diminished through millennia in exile.²⁴⁸ For Begin, there was a direct relationship between the weakening of the Jewish people on the one hand, and its time in exile which had allowed for

²⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 137-8.

²⁴⁶ Peleg, I. (1987) *Begin’s Foreign Policy, 1977-1983. Israel’s Move to the Right*. Connecticut: Greenwood Press, Inc. p. 51-57. See also Peleg, I. & Scham, P. (2007) Israeli Neo-Revisionism and American Neoconservatism: The Unexplored Parallels. *Middle East Journal*. 61 (1). p. 73-94.

²⁴⁷ Revisionist Zionism, in turn, was a movement that grew out of Theodor Herzl’s political Zionism, which saw the state building project in more practical terms; a necessity to ensure communal survival of the Jews.

²⁴⁸ Peleg, I. (1987) *Begin’s Foreign Policy, 1977-1983. Israel’s Move to the Right*. p. 51-7.

atrocities like the Holocaust, on the other; once the Jewish people would return to Eretz Yisrael, its heroism and grandeur of ancient times would manifest again.²⁴⁹ Moreover, neo-revisionism based its claim to *Eretz Yisrael* more staunchly on its ancient historical and spiritual ties to the land, than did its Labour predecessors or and political Zionism in general.²⁵⁰

In a private letter to Egyptian President Anwar Sadat on 4 August, 1980, Begin expresses this view clearly, when he writes that “To the Jewish people Jerusalem is not only holy; it is their history for three millennia, their heart, their dream, the visible symbol of their national redemption.”²⁵¹ In this short excerpt, Begin emphasizes that the claim of the Jewish people to Jerusalem is upheld by its religious (“*holy*”) as well as historical (“*history for three millennia*”) relationship with that city. In discussing how Begin viewed the Jewish people’s claim to *Eretz Yisrael* it is indeed implausible to separate historical and religious aspects from one another; that said, it *is* possible to get a sense of just how important the religious dimension was to Begin, by looking at his public and private discourse across a range of contexts. In a public prayer at the Wailing Wall following Israel’s (re)capture of Jerusalem in 1967, for example, Begin spoke the following words:

We shall yet come to Hebron, the city of the Four Couples, and there we shall prostrate ourselves at the graves of the Patriarchs of our people. We shall yet be on the way to Euphrath as thou comest to Bethlehem of Judah. We shall pray at the Tomb of Rachel and we shall
_____ bring to mind the prayer of the prophet: “A voice is heard in Raman,
_____ weiling and bitter lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children, she

²⁴⁹ Rowland, R. C. (1985) *The Rhetoric of Menachem Begin: The Myth of Redemption Through Return*. Maryland: University Press of America. p. 1-10.

²⁵⁰ In his seminal pamphlet *Der Judenstaat* (1896), the founding father of Zionism, Theodor Herzl, suggested that Jews consider the possibility of settling in Argentina, writing “ Shall we choose Palestine or Argentine? We shall take what is given us, and what is selected by Jewish public opinion.” (Herzl, T. (1988) *The Jewish State*. New York: Dover Publications. p. 97.) Moreover, following the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, the latter’s Labour party was not, as Likud, bent on establishing Israeli sovereignty over the territories marked Palestinian by international standards, following their capture in 1967.

²⁵¹ Hurwitz, H. & Medad, Y. (eds.) (2011) Letters following Begin’s Hospitalization, August 2-27, 1980. In: *Peace in the Making: The Menachem Begin-Anwar El-Sadat Personal Correspondence*. p. 202-203.

refuseth to be comforted for her children, for they are not. Refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears for there is a reward for thy labour, saith the Lord, and they shall return from the land of the enemy. And there is hope for thy latter end and thy children shall return to their borders.²⁵²

Begin's reference to the Palestinian city of Hebron as "the city of the Four Couples" invokes a testimony in the Talmud in which Hebron (or Kiriath-Arba, as it was formerly known) is described as the home of four Biblical Couples: Adam and Eve; Abraham and Sarah; Isaac and Rebecca; and, Jacob and Leah.²⁵³ Similarly, his reference to the "graves of the Patriarchs of our people" invokes the founders - Abraham, Isaac and Jacob - of Judaism, just as the "Tomb of Rachel" does the Biblical matriarch, Rachel, and her tomb in Bethlehem of Judah whose location is described in the Bible to be in Ephath (as Bethlehem was formerly known).²⁵⁴ When invoking Biblical references, as Begin does, alongside statements like "*we shall pray*" and "*we shall bring to mind the prayer of the prophet,*" their meaning becomes more than merely historical. The following reference from Begin's speech in a less "religiously charged" environment than the Wailing Wall²⁵⁵ sends a similar message. It shows Begin's response to Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's speech delivered to the Knesset on November 20, 1977, in which Sadat referred to the West Bank and Gaza as "*the Occupied Territories,*"²⁵⁶ and called for Israel's presumed understanding of the need to

²⁵² Hurwitz, H. & Medad, Y. (eds.) (2011) Begin addresses Jewish Leaders in New York, September 20, 1978. In: *Peace in the Making: The Menachem Begin-Anwar El-Sadat Personal Correspondence*. p. 167-168.

²⁵³ Van der Horst, P. (2014) *Studies in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*. Ancient Judaism and early Christianity. Leiden, Boston: Brill. p. 3.

²⁵⁴ The Bible, Genesis, 35: 19-20.

²⁵⁵ The Wailing Wall, or the ancient wall of Herod's Temple, is the centre of the Jewish spiritual world.

²⁵⁶ No Author (1998) *The Camp David Accords and Related Documents*. Beer-Sheva: The Chaim Herzog Center for Middle East Studies and Diplomacy, p. 39.

create a Palestinian state, given the Jews “*moral and legal justification to set up a national home on a land that did not all belong to [them]*.”²⁵⁷ To this, Begin responded:

[...] it is my duty to tell our guest and the peoples watching us and listening to our words about the link between our people and this land.

[...] No sir, we did not take over any strange land. We returned to our homeland. The link between our people and this land is eternal. It was created at the dawn of human history. It was never severed. In this land we established our civilization. Here our prophets spoke those holy words you cited this very day; there the Kings of Judah and Israel prostrated themselves; here we became a nation; here we established our Kingdom and, when we were exiled from our country by the force that was exercised against us, even when we were far away we did not forget this Land, not even for a single day; we prayed for it; we longed for it; we have believed in our return to it.²⁵⁸

Here, Begin speaks of the Jews’ “*eternal*” link to *Eretz Yisrael*, an adjective that implies more than merely a historical connection between Jews and the Land of Israel. Similarly, he refers to “*prophets*” who spoke “*holy*” words on the Land of Israel, a land that Jews for millennia subsequently, “*prayed*” that they would return to. In his address to the Egyptian people in November 1977, Begin moreover implied that the bond between Jews and the Land of Israel is Divinely sanctioned through Moses, a common prophet of Jews and Muslims:

It is in the Holy Koran, in Surah 5, that our right to this land was stated and sanctified. May I read to you this eternal Surah. “Recall

²⁵⁷ Ibid. p. 42.

²⁵⁸ Ibid. p. 48-49.

when Moses said to his people, O my people, remember the goodness of Allah towards you when He appointed prophets among you. O my people, enter the Holy Land which Allah hath written down as yours.²⁵⁹

In addition to its staunch advocacy of the Jewish people's return to *Eretz Yisrael*, the neo-revisionist ideology was characterized by its ever-present perception of extreme anti-Semitism. Unlike political Zionism of the late twentieth century onwards, which thought anti-Semitism to be a result of social, political and economic conditions, Begin and his contemporary neo-revisionists, many of whom had a lived memory of the atrocities committed against European Jews during World War II, viewed anti-Semitism in "theological terms", as "an almost cosmic reality, a metaphysical condition" and often "religiously inspired".²⁶⁰ The neo-revisionist perception of anti-Semitism applied above all to Arabs, who were referred to as "Amalek;" the Biblical enemy nation which, upon fighting the Hebrews, the latter were commanded by God to annihilate. The Amalek-reference was invoked by political and popular voices, and reinforced by religious leadership. In his article, *The Genocide Commandment in the Torah*, for example, Rabbi Israel Hess likened Arabs to Amalekites and concluded that "the day will come when we all be summoned for the commandment of Milchemet Mitzvah [an obligatory war] for the annihilation of Amalek"²⁶¹ and, according to Armstrong (2001) argued in this essay that Palestinians deserved a similar fate to the Amalekites because "Palestinians were to Jews what darkness was to light."²⁶² Similarly, albeit in a less radical manner, Rabbi Eliezer Waldenberg announced that non-Jews should not make up a majority in any Israeli city and, in

²⁵⁹ Hurwitz, H. & Medad, Y. (eds.) (2011) (eds.) *Begin broadcasts directly to the Egyptian People, November 11, 1977. Peace in the Making: The Menachem Begin-Anwar El-Sadat Personal Correspondence.* p. 8.

²⁶⁰ Peleg, I. (1987) *Begin's Foreign Policy, 1977-1983. Israel's Move to the Right.* p. 55.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.* p. 70.

²⁶² Armstrong, K. (2001) *The Battle for God: A History of Fundamentalism.* Ballantine Books. p. 345-7. See also Hirst, D. (2004) *Pursuing the Millennium. The Nation.*

Jerusalem, not be allowed to live at all.²⁶³ Not everyone in the neo-revisionist camp espoused equally radical views to Eliezer and, especially, Hess; however, the Amalek reference was used by it to “give religious sanction” to the neo-revisionist position of unlimited war against the Arabs.²⁶⁴

For Begin, perceived anti-Semitism on the part of Arabs was espoused nowhere more vehemently than within the ranks of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO),²⁶⁵ as he expressed unequivocally in his statement to the Zionist General Council on 23 June 1977, a few days after taking office:

And with regard to the Palestinian State, we have to realize that we are faced with the most cruel enemy of the Jewish people since the days of the Nazis. They have made up their minds to try, and can now but try to destroy us, man, woman and child. We don't really need the Palestinian Charter to know this. It is written there, in Paragraph 19, that the establishment of the State of Israel is null and void as though it had never been. They met together in Cairo, and there was hope in certain countries for a toning down of their position and hope was expressed that this paragraph would be retracted. But they didn't even consider it. It didn't cross their minds. They confirmed it explicitly -for this is the line of their thought. [...] And it is they who, inevitably, would be in control of this state. No agreement will be

²⁶³ Peleg, I. (1987) *Begin's Foreign Policy, 1977-1983. Israel's Move to the Right*. p. 70-1.

²⁶⁴ Ibid. p. 71.

²⁶⁵ The Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) was established in 1964 with the official aim of liberating Palestine through armed struggle, and establishing a sovereign Palestinian state on the territory that had comprised the former British Mandate. Until the Middle East Peace Process in the 1990s, the PLO refused to recognise Israel's right to exist.

made, unless it is with some other body, that would transfer Judea and Samaria and Gaza to these murderers.²⁶⁶

It can convincingly be argued that Begin's depiction of an inherently anti-Semitic PLO, especially, but also broader Arab region and world at large, made the victories of a minuscule (in relative terms) Jewish people and state seem almost miraculous and as ones aided by a higher power. The best example of this is the decisive military victory of Israel in the 1967 war when the, still young, Jewish state defeated the long-standing armies of Egypt, Syria and Jordan in a matter of just six days. This event was interpreted by many as one facilitated by Divine intervention,²⁶⁷ and, as chapter 3 showed, marked a turning point in Israel's socio-political landscape followed by increased religious conversions. By the same token, Begin's perception, and that of neo-revisionists in general, of an inherently anti-Semitic world legitimized the militant stance vis-a-vis Arab state and non-state actors in particular, that characterized the neo-revisionist ideology. In line with this, Peleg (1987) characterizes neo-revisionism as a combination of "secular realism" and "religious messianism."²⁶⁸ This multi-faceted nature of the neo-revisionist ideology, which simultaneously appealed to parties and constituents belonging to the religious and nationalist right, is likely the reason why Begin obtained the wide-ranging support that made possible his electoral victories of 1977 and 1982. Importantly, this does not necessarily imply that Begin employed his celebrated oratory skills in a manipulative way merely to secure support from across the board. As will become clear throughout this chapter, Begin's was, by nature, exceptionally candid and never one to employ obscure terminology to cover his beliefs and rationalization, even if they appeared contradictory; as Sofer (1998) observes, for Begin, "reality" genuinely existed on two levels - "one ideological, and

²⁶⁶ ISRAEL MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. (1977) Statement by Prime Minister Begin to the Zionist General Council, 23 June 1977, Vol. 4-5: 1977-1977. Available from: <http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/MFADocuments/Yearbook3/Pages/6%20Statement%20by%20Prime%20Minister%20Begin%20to%20the%20Zionist.aspx>. [Accessed: 1 December, 2013].

²⁶⁷ See i.e. Haddad, Y. (1992) Islamists and the "Problem of Israel": The 1967 Awakening. *Middle East Journal*. 46 (2). p. 269-70.

²⁶⁸ Peleg, I. (1987) *Begin's Foreign Policy, 1977-1983. Israel's Move to the Right*. p. 54.

another resting on the “rationality of political realism,”²⁶⁹ to which she adds that in Begin’s “profound inner contradiction, the romantic element has frequently undermined the realistic political assumptions [...]”²⁷⁰

4.2 Begin’s Foreign Policy doctrine

Begin’s world-view, characterized by “secular realism” and “religious messianism” - to borrow Peleg’s terminology - and underpinned by a deep-rooted perception of pervasive anti-Semitic hostility from Arabs in particular, and above all the PLO, reflected in a foreign policy doctrine characterised by two main tenets. First, liberation of *Eretz Yisrael*, which for Begin meant the territory comprising Jerusalem (including East Jerusalem), Judea, Samaria (roughly, modern day West Bank) and the Gaza Strip, in addition to Israel’s international borders which marked said territories as Palestinian. Begin expressed this position incessantly before and during his time in power as Prime Minister of Israel, for example in his joint press conference with Sadat in Jerusalem on 21 November, 1977:

Since the book of Samuel, and President Sadat knows the Bible perfectly well, no less than the Koran - so he knows the book of Samuel as well - where it is written for the first time: “And no locksmith shall be found throughout Eretz-Yisrael.” The translation of Eretz-Yisrael is Palestine.²⁷¹

In other discourse, Begin was more explicit about the areas which he considered to comprise *Eretz Yisrael*: in his speech to Jewish leaders in New York on 20 September 1978, for example, he stated that “Yes, Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip are integral parts of Eretz Yisrael.”²⁷² Similarly, with

²⁶⁹ Sofer, S. (1988) *Begin: An Autonomy of Leadership*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. p. 99.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ Hurwitz, H. & Medad, Y. (eds.) (2011) *Peace in the Making: The Menachem Begin-Anwar El-Sadat Personal Correspondence*. p. 46.

²⁷² Hurwitz, H. & Medad, Y. (eds.) (2011) *Begin addresses Jewish Leaders in New York, September 20, 1978*. p. 88.

regards to Jerusalem, Begin stated in his letter of 4 August, 1980 to Sadat that “Jerusalem is and will be one, under Israel’s sovereignty, its indivisible capital.”²⁷³ The second tenet of Begin’s foreign policy doctrine was full, contractual peace with all of Israel’s neighboring Arab states, which he held would enhance Israel’s security in the region. As with his stance vis-a-vis *Eretz Yisrael*, Begin expressed his commitment to this position many times over, most notably, perhaps, in his speech to the Knesset during Sadat’s visit to Jerusalem, in which he stated that “We want peace with all our neighbors - with Egypt and with Jordan, with Syria and with Lebanon.”²⁷⁴ A militant stance underpinned both of those tenets, as Begin expressed on another occasion:

This ought to be the rule for us: every nation should try to achieve its national goal by diplomatic means, as far as is possible. The use of force, if right is on your side, is not forbidden. At times it is even obligatory.²⁷⁵

Begin’s foreign policy doctrine would reflect in the two major foreign policy decisions that marked his Prime Ministership: the Camp David Accords and Operation Peace for Galilee; both are discussed below in the context of religion’s role in them.

4.3 Menachem Begin and the Camp David Accords

This is, Ladies and Gentlemen, the third greatest day in my life. The first was May 14, 1948, when our flag was hoisted [...] The second day was when Jerusalem became one city and our [...] soldiers [...] kissed the ancient stones of the remnants of the Western Wall, destined _____ to protect the chosen place of God’s glory. [...] This is the third

²⁷³ Ibid. p. 203.

²⁷⁴ Ibid. p. 31.

²⁷⁵ Begin cited in Sofer, S. (1988) *Begin: An Autonomy of Leadership*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell. p. 139.

[greatest] day in my life. I have signed a treaty of peace with our neighbor, with Egypt. The heart is full and overflowing.²⁷⁶

These words were spoken by Begin, following his signing of the Treaty of Peace between Egypt and Israel, on the lawn of the White House in Washington on March 26, 1979, alongside signatory Egyptian President Anwar Al-Sadat and, witness, US President Jimmy Carter. The peace treaty was a result of negotiations preceding and following the Camp David Accords, signed and witnessed by the same three parties some six months prior. A two-framework agreement, the accords comprised of plans for “Peace in the Middle East” and “the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel”. The former framework addressed the need to “solve the Palestinian problem in all its aspects”²⁷⁷ by allowing for full autonomy to Palestinian Arabs living in the West Bank and Gaza, while providing for Israeli forces to remain in specified locations during a transitional period of five years. The final status of the West Bank and Gaza was to be determined through future negotiations. The latter agreement called for full withdrawal of Israeli military forces from the Sinai Peninsula, granting full exercise of Egyptian sovereignty over that territory, and leading to the establishment of a binding peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, including diplomatic relations.²⁷⁸ As the opening excerpt from Begin’s speech indicates, the latter was achieved in March of 1979; the “Palestinian Problem,” however, remains to be solved. The following two sub-sections respectively look at the Israel-Peace Treaty and Framework II of the Accords in the context of Begin’s “religious beliefs” (defined in chapter 2 as the interaction between a leaders “faith” and the interpretive tradition of his “belief-community.”)

²⁷⁶ ISRAEL MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (1979) Treaty of Peace between Israel and Egypt. Protocols, Annexes, Letters, Memorandum of Agreement between Israel and the United States, Addresses of Presidents Carter and Sadat, and Prime Minister Begin, 26 March 1979’, Volumes 4-5:1977-1977. Available from: <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/mfadocuments/yearbook3/pages/251%20treaty%20of%20peace%20between%20israel%20and%20egypt%20memor.aspx> [Accessed: 1 December, 2013].

²⁷⁷ No Author (1998) *The Camp David Accords and Related Documents*. p. 160.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.* p 161

Begin's religious beliefs and the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty

Begin's agreement to sign the Camp David Accords was in line with his foreign policy doctrine which, as we saw above, committed him to liberating *Eretz Yisrael* on the one hand, and obtaining full contractual peace with neighbouring states, on the other. This is most obvious in the case Framework II of the Accords, which called for an Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty on the condition of Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula. It is true that Begin, when he was part of the opposition,²⁷⁹ disapproved of then ruling Labour party's interim talks with Egypt and the United States concerning the potential withdrawal of Israel from the Sinai Peninsula, but he did so because such talks did not request a final peace treaty between Israel and Egypt; not because they were at odds with his position regarding withdrawal from the Sinai or relations with Egypt.²⁸⁰ Moreover, Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula did not go against his commitment to liberate *Eretz Yisrael*; to Begin, the Sinai Peninsula did not constitute the Land of Israel and certainly not land of the same Biblical stature as Judea and Samaria. The Peace Treaty with Egypt was thus a welcome move for Begin, and all the more so given the increasingly insecure environment in which Israel found itself, with the Islamic Revolution unfolding in Iran - Israel's sole regional ally - and Islamist discourse intensifying regionally, alongside anti-Israel sentiment solidified by four Arab-Israeli wars and Saudi Arabia-led oil embargo imposed in protest of Western nations' aid to Israel during the Yom Kippur War in 1974. Under such conditions, a populous and military strong Egypt that, given its prominent role in the unfolding Islamist ideology held significant mobilizing potential, ~~would seem to Begin,~~ a peace treaty signatory of high calibre that could serve to increase Israel's

²⁷⁹ Begin was of the Opposition since the first Knesset in 1948 and for the all of the following ones until he was elected leader of the Government in 1977.

²⁸⁰ For Sadat's part, the Egyptian President, wanting to regain control over Sinai and having realized after Egyptian partial defeat to Israel during the 1973 war that this would be achieved better through negotiations than on the battle field, entered into interim negotiations with the US and Israel. These negotiations were not explicit in necessitating a final Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement however, and it was with this point that Begin took issue. Sofer, S. (1988) *Begin: An Autonomy of Leadership*, Oxford: Basil. p. 53.

security standing in the region.²⁸¹ Begin enjoyed the support of the majority in the Knesset for his signing of the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty - the ninth Knesset's (1977-81) approval of the Peace Treaty was reflected in 84 "in favour" votes as opposed to only 19 votes "against" and 17 abstained from voting.²⁸² Israeli public opinion, too, was largely in favour and Begin was proud to state to Sadat upon his visit to Jerusalem on 20 November, 1977 that,

Today, Jerusalem is bedecked with two flags - the Egyptian and the Israeli. Together, Mr. President, we have seen our little children waving both flags. Let us sign a peace treaty and establish such a situation forever both in Jerusalem and in Cairo. I hope the day will come when Egyptian children will wave Israeli and Egyptian flags together, just as the Israeli children are waving both of these flags together in Jerusalem [...]²⁸³

The support of the Knesset and public notwithstanding, Begin met vehement opposition from a small, but vocal minority of the Gush Emunim movement who dismissed the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai on explicitly religious grounds. As detailed in chapter 3, the "totally religious, messianic and fundamentalist" Gush Emunim movement, which saw the Sinai Peninsula as part of Eretz Yisrael and moreover feared that Begin's weak stance on Sinai would compromise Judea and Samaria, set up "The Movement to Halt the Sinai Retreat", which proactively established Jewish communities, including settler families and Jewish seminaries, in the Sinai.²⁸⁴ Its efforts were not successful and Gush Emunim settlers were forcefully removed by Israeli soldiers in 1981 when the

²⁸¹ This analysis is also made by i.e. Telhami, S. (1990) *Power and Leadership in International Bargaining: The Path to The Camp David Accords*, New York: Columbia University Press: New York. p. 43-6.

²⁸² Hurwitz, H. & Medad, Y (eds.) (2011) *Peace in the Making: The Menachem Begin-Anwar El-Sadat Personal Correspondence*. p. 287.

²⁸³ Hurwitz, H. & Medad, Y. (eds.) (2011) *Begin addresses the Knesset after Sadat* p. 32.

²⁸⁴ Frisch, H. & Sandler, S. (2004) *Religion, State, and the International System in the Israel-Palestinian Conflict*. p. 83.

Sinai was to be returned to Egypt.²⁸⁵ Although Gush Emunim's was the loudest "religious" voice, it was not the only one. Begin would at times, though not consistently, use religion to frame the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty as an effort which was sanctioned by God. This is evident, for example, in his speech at the signing of the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty, where he spoke the following words:

[...] The ancient Jewish people gave the world the vision of eternal peace, of universal disarmament, of abolishing the teaching and learning of war. Two prophets, Yeshayahu ben Amotz and Micha Hamorashti, having foreseen the spiritual unity of man under God – with His word coming forth from Jerusalem – gave the nations of the world the following vision expressed in identical terms: "And they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war anymore." Despite the tragedies and disappointments of the past, we must never forsake that vision, that human dream, that unshakable faith. Peace is the beauty of life. It is sunshine. It is the smile of a child, the love of a mother, the joy of a father, the togetherness of a family.²⁸⁶

In this passage, Begin draws a connection between the teachings of two *Prophets* of Israel, who foresaw the *spiritual* unity of man under *God*, and *eternal* peace between nations. Given the context in which he relayed this speech, Begin seems to suggest that the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ ISRAEL MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (1979) Treaty of Peace between Israel and Egypt. Protocols, Annexes, Letters, Memorandum of Agreement between Israel and the United States, Addresses of Presidents Carter and Sadat, and Prime Minister Begin, 26 March 1979', Volumes 4-5:1977-1977. Available from: <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/mfadocuments/yearbook3/pages/251%20treaty%20of%20peace%20between%20israel%20and%20egypt%20memor.aspx> [Accessed: 1 December, 2013].

fulfills religious teachings, or is at least in accordance with them. Begin employed a similar rhetoric during his joint press conference with Sadat following the latter's visit to Jerusalem in 1977:

[...] as we both believe, the President [Sadat] and I, in Divine Providence, before the departure of the President and his party, we pray to the Almighty that he give all of us the wisdom to continue in our efforts to bring peace to our nations – real peace [...] ²⁸⁷

Although less explicitly than in the previous excerpt, Begin frames the immanent Egyptian-Israeli peace as one that is somehow in line with God's will. His rhetoric can be understood in various ways: first, as a means of bestowing legitimacy upon himself and his decision to sign the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty. As we saw in chapter 3, the social and political milieu in Israel had become increasingly religious since the early 1970s, with religious conversions taking place more frequently, possibly organically or as a result of proselytizing efforts by religious parties like Agudat and the National Religious Party (NRP). With Gush Emunim's vociferous, religiously-grounded opposition to the Peace Treaty, Begin may have perceived a need to ensure his religious constituents, moderate and radical alike, of the Peace Treaty's religious legitimacy. Second, it is possible that Begin's public discourse was a true reflection of his religious beliefs. This becomes increasingly plausible when reviewing accounts of his personality. William Quandt, who was a staff member on the National Security Council in the Carter administration and actively involved in the negotiations preceding both the Camp David Accords and the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty, writes that Begin had a "large capacity for self-persuasion" as well as "an unmatched skill" of taking an idea and building it into a pattern for the purpose of granting legitimacy to an existing idea.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁷ Hurwitz, H. & Medad, Y. (eds.) (2011) *Begin Addresses Jewish Leaders in New York, September 20, 1978*. p. 88.

²⁸⁸ Quandt, W. B. (2005) *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict since 1967, 3rd edition, Washington DC*. p. 197.

Moreover, as indicated earlier, Sofer (1988) notes that in Begin's "[...] profound inner contradiction [between ideology and political realism], the romantic element has frequently undermined the realistic political assumptions [...]"²⁸⁹ In this light, it would not be farfetched to suggest that Begin saw the signing of a peace treaty with Egypt not exclusively in terms enhancing the material security of the Israeli state, but rather in the context of his broader world-view, as a necessary means to ensure redemption of the Jewish people; a view that, as we have seen in section 4.1 above had, for Begin, a religious dimension. Perhaps, Begin even saw Israel's peace with the region's most militarily powerful actor, one that had been a major aggressor during all four Arab-Israeli wars, as a sign that the Jewish people had reclaimed its grandeur and strength as a result of its presence on *Eretz Yisrael*. Begin had previously, in the context of the 1967-war expressed that it was "With the help of God Almighty, [that Israel] overcame the forces of aggression, and we have guaranteed existence for our nation;"²⁹⁰ a sentiment that was shared by many in the settler movement who saw God's help as the only full explanation for Israel's unlikely military victory against three aggressive Arab armies of Egypt, Syria and Jordan. Even some Ultra-Orthodox Jews, who had previously refrained from supporting Zionism on the grounds that a Jewish state should only follow the Messiah's arrival, became Zionists in the wake of the 1967 war. Seen in this light, Begin's religious framing of the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty tells a story that goes beyond "mere" instrumental legitimization and rather fits logically within his broader world-view. Importantly, the fact that Begin's understanding of *Eretz Yisrael's* borders is different than that of fundamentalist religious groups does, by no means, imply that it is "religiously" less legitimate. As Shindler (2001) notes, there are various passages in the Bible, which delineate different borders of *Eretz Yisrael*. The passage in Genesis, for example, in which God promises to the Patriarchs "To your seed I give this land from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates," has meant to the much of the

²⁸⁹ Sofer, S. (1988) *Begin: An Autonomy of Leadership*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. p. 99.

²⁹⁰ Lukacs, Y. (ed.) (1992) *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: A Documentary Record, 1967-1990*. Cambridge University Press. p. 148.

Orthodox Jewry that *Eretz Yisrael* comprises parts of modern-day Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq.²⁹¹ Yet, another definition in Numbers delineates the Land of Israel to be on the territory of Canaan - roughly, from Mount Hor in the north to “the Brook of Egypt” in the South, and in this definition the territory East of the River Jordan (Bashan and Gilead) is excluded. In general, the term *Eretz Yisrael* has taken on different meanings for different groups of Zionists, including secular ones as it did for Revisionism’s founding father Ze’ev Jabotinsky, for example.²⁸⁵ For Begin, though certainly not as one-dimensional as that of the Orthodox Jewry, his attachment to *Eretz Yisrael* was neither entirely secular, as this chapter has shown thus far.

Begin’s religious beliefs and Framework II of the Camp David Accords

The settler movement’s religious fundamentalists saw Begin’s signing of the Camp David Accords as “a religious front of the first degree” and symbolically associated it with the shameful peace signed with Hitler in 1939 by Britain’s Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. The “betrayal”, as was his accord signing characterised, even prompted establishment of The Covenant of Eretz Yisrael Loyalists; a large-scale coalition composed of student groups, political movements and settler supporters of the maximalist cause, which sought to “alert the public about the grave error committed by Begin.”²⁹² Despite what religious fundamentalists may have initially feared, Begin, unlike his Camp David negotiation partners, never intended for the Accord’s efforts to “solve the Palestinian problem in all its aspects,”²⁹³ to mean that Israel relinquish “sovereignty” over the West Bank or, what he incessantly referred to as Judea and Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. This becomes clear when appraising the Camp David Agreement in light of the negotiations that preceded it, the (lack of) actions that followed it and indeed the minute details which comprised it: through Begin’s meticulous and tenacious approach to the

²⁹¹ Shindler, C. (2001) *Likud and the Search for Eretz Yisrael: From the Bible to the Twenty-First Century*. Israel Affairs. p. 93.

²⁹² Sprinzak, E. (1989) *The Emergence of the Israeli Radical Right*, *Comparative Politics*, 21 (2) p. 175.

²⁹³ ‘Text of the Camp David Accords’ *The Camp David Accords and Related Documents* (1998) Beer-Sheva: The Chaim Herzog Center for Middle East Studies and Diplomacy, p. 160

negotiations, he ensured that the final agreement to which he gave his signature at Camp David, was phrased in such a way that he could be neither expected nor forced to make any compromise that would require Israeli settlement or military withdrawal from Judea, Samaria and Gaza. Quandt (2005) who, as noted previously, took part in the Camp David negotiations, details the type of assiduousness and concessional requests exposed by Begin, who he described as having “a feel for the strategic use of time, taking the negotiations to the brink of collapse over secondary issues to avoid being pressed on key problems.”²⁹⁴ By “key problems” Quandt refers specifically to the Palestinian issue, where Begin demonstrated an “unwillingness to accept that the principle of withdrawal from occupied territory, as called for in Resolution 242, should apply to the West Bank and Gaza at the end of a transitional period,”²⁹⁵ and insisted that “any agreement [...] concerning Egyptian-Israeli relations should in no way be dependent on resolving the Palestinian question.”²⁹⁰ Egypt’s Foreign Minister, Mohamed Ibrahim Kamel, makes a similar observation in his first-hand account of the Camp David negotiations:

Every hour brought reports of further concessions. Begin insisted on deletion of all reference to “the non-admissibility of acquiring territory by force”, telling Carter that “if he had to sign or cut off his two hands he still would not sign it.” This resulted in the deletion of the reference to this cardinal principle of Resolution 242. [...] In return for the word “full” that Carter had added to the phrase “autonomy”, Begin insisted on inserting the phrase “administrative council” between brackets before the phrase “the

²⁹⁴ Quandt, W. B. (2005) *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict since 1967*. p. 201.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 198.

self-governing authority” so as to minimize its jurisdiction to administrative questions to the exclusion of the legislative and judicial.²⁹⁶

Begin made his intentions vis-a-vis Framework I of the Camp David Accords clear across various contexts, and his justification of this position with reference to the “religious strand” of his worldview can be detected across all of them. In a letter to Sadat on May 1980, for example, upon pressure from the latter to alter his position on the Palestinian question, Begin answered that “Our position on settlements in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District is certainly well-known to you, as is that on Jerusalem: it is the exercise of our inherent right [...];”²⁹⁷ an “inherent right” that came from the Jewish people’s unique relationship with *Eretz Yisrael*. As he stressed to an Egyptian journalist during a joint press conference with Sadat, “we were given our right to exist by the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We have paid a price for that right, higher perhaps than any other nation. It is inherent; it required no recognition.”²⁹⁸ Like in previous examples, Begin’s choice of words denote more than merely a historical relationship between the Jewish people and *Eretz Yisrael*: it explicitly bases the Jewish people’s right on something beyond the Jewish patriarchs, on God. This is further expressed in his speech to Jewish leaders in New York, on 20 September 1978 where he stated that,

The Bible is a living document – eternally living document. We live on this Book, with this Book – forever. And my predecessor of blessed memory, the late Mr. Ben-Gurion, aptly expressed himself when he said, ‘Some people say that the British Mandate is our Bible. It is untrue’ he said. ‘The Bible is our mandate!’ Yes, Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip are integral parts of Eretz Yisrael – the land of our forefathers, which we have never forgotten

²⁹⁶ Kamel, M. I. (1986) *The Camp David Accords: A Testimony*. London: KPI Ltd. p. 372.

²⁹⁷ Hurwitz, H.y & Medad, Y. (eds.) (2011) *Letters ahead of the Ninth Round of Autonomy Talks*. p. 184-5.

²⁹⁸ Hurwitz, H. & Medad, Y. (eds.) (2011) *An exchange of letters, March 1-10, 1978*. p. 67.

during exile, when we were a persecuted minority, humiliated, killed, our blood shed, burned alive. We always remembered Zion, and Zion means Eretz Yisrael. It is our land as of right.²⁹⁴

Here too, Begin frames Jewish ties to *Eretz Yisrael* with references to the Bible as an “*eternally living*” document and land “*as of right*” which, taken in context of Begin’s world-view, seem to denote more than merely a historical relationship. What is more, Begin would never depart from using the Biblical terms when referring to what his negotiation partners, Carter and Sadat, termed “the West Bank”. This is evident in Begin’s personal correspondence with Sadat, for example, in which the latter, voicing specific points of disagreement between him and Begin, wrote:

Sadat: It goes without saying, also, that these actions contradict the provision of the Fourth Geneva Convention which prohibits the annexation of occupied territories.

Begin: The Egyptian delegate votes for a resolution demanding that by November 15, Israel withdraw from Judea, Samaria (my language), the Gaza District, the Golan Height and Jerusalem.²⁹⁵

Begin’s insistence on referring to the West Bank by its Biblical name, despite the non-ideological context in which the area is discussed in his correspondence with Sadat implies, if nothing else, the importance of those territories to Begin. As with Framework II, Begin’s use of religious discourse in the context of Framework II can be understood in various ways. As above, it can be seen to legitimize to his audience, be it Sadat, Carter or the Israeli public, his position vis-a-vis Judea, Samaria and Gaza. His need for legitimacy in the eyes of the public, in particular, may be explained with reference to the vocal opposition from the likes of Gush Emunim and the general religiosity of

the Israeli public at this time. This need notwithstanding, Begin's use of such discourse *across* public and private contexts, in addition to his assiduousness that Quandt and Kamel record in this regard, suggests that it rather speaks to a attachment to his ideals which, as noted in the section about Begin's world-view, derived in important part from his faith. It is noteworthy that if Biblical teachings "prescribed" Israeli withdrawal from Sinai, as Begin's discourse in the context of the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty suggest, their prescription for Judea and Samaria was quite the opposite. In the latter context, Begin suggested, ever ardently, that it was Israeli *presence* on Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip - territories of the highest Biblical stature - which was condoned, if not commanded, by God; not *peace* as in the Egyptian case. This can of course be explained by the different Biblical status of those areas in Begin's view; but, if nothing else, that only serves to reinforce the notion that Begin's foreign policy was in line with his world-view.

4.4 Menachem Begin and Operation Peace for Galilee

On 6 June, 1982 Israel launched a military invasion, Operation Peace for Galilee, into Southern Lebanon; officially a defensive, limited invasion seeking to push the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) factions 40 kilometers north of the Israel-Lebanon border in order to protect civilians in the Galilee region in Northern Israel from artillery and rocket attacks by the Lebanon-based PLO. Though unbeknownst to the Israeli public and most of the government at the time, the Operation's objectives were much more extensive and included destroying PLO infrastructure throughout Lebanon, along with the Syria forces militarily aiding it (albeit with its own geopolitical interests in mind), and installing a Christian Lebanese, pro-Israel government. Amongst many other sources that reveal these intentions is a private letter from Begin to U.S. Ambassador to Robert McFarlane on 11 August, 1982, in which the Prime Minister noted that "Israel's principal goals" in the context of Operation Peace for Galilee were "[...] a) to strengthen the government of President

Amin Jemayel, and b) to get Syrians to withdraw from Lebanon.”²⁹⁹ Ultimately, such measures were thought to foster conditions for a peace treaty between Israel and Lebanon; an objective in line with Begin’s foreign policy doctrine which sought peace with all of Israel’s neighbors through force, if diplomacy fell short of achieving the desired results.²⁹⁷ The launch of Operation Peace for Galilee initially enjoyed overwhelming backing from the Israeli public which, as chapter 3 detailed, supported the neo-revisionist militant stance on foreign policy and a general suspicion vis-a-vis Arabs and especially Palestinians. As it became clear that Begin, in conjunction with his Defence Minister, Ariel Sharon, intended for Operation Peace for Galilee to be a much more elaborate invasion than it had initially been presented as, public opinion and that of the Knesset became increasingly divided. Following the Sabra and Shatila massacre of September 1982, where around one thousand of Palestinian civilians in West Beirut refugee camps were killed by Phalange³⁰⁰ militia with the suspected complicity of the IDF, constituents in Israel turned decidedly against the war. 400,000 people, then 10% of the Israeli population, called for Sharon’s resignation and an official enquiry into the massacre. Sharon stepped down as a result of the report findings, and Begin resigned out of his own initiative the following year.

Unlike in the Camp David Accords, especially Framework I, where Begin’s religious beliefs featured explicitly across private and public contexts, the former appeared only sporadically, if at all, in discourse surrounding Operation Peace for Galilee. It is still possible, however, to discern its important role in this context. The sections below will show that by placing Operation Peace for Galilee in the context of Begin’s world-view, we cannot hope to understand the invasion without reference to the world-view’s religious dimension. Additionally, they will show religion as a means

²⁹⁹ Letter, Menachem Begin to Robert MacFarlane, 11 August, 1982, box 16, Prime Minister’s Office Collection, Israeli State Archives.

³⁰⁰ The Phalange was a Christian Lebanese right-wing party, with a militant wing, with which IDF collaborated during the Israeli siege of West Beirut.

with which Begin legitimizes the invasion to an increasing critical Knesset and public, and possibly also to himself.

Begin's religious beliefs and the rationale for Operation Peace for Galilee

The decision to launch Operation Peace for Galilee was instigated by an assassination attempt in London on 3 June, 1982 against the Israeli Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Shlomo Argov, by three members of the militant, Palestinian splinter group, the Abu Nidal Organisation. Begin responded to the shooting by stating that Argov had been shot “because he was a Jew, because he was an Israeli, because he was a symbol of the State of Israel.”²⁹⁹ To Begin, the assassination attempt was clearly an act symbolic of something much bigger than Argov; it was a manifestation of the Arab anti-semitism that, as we have seen, occupied a protruding role in his world-view and made justifiable a militant response. Indeed, the attack on Argov was, as Begin's Defense Minister, Ariel Sharon, has since described in his memoirs, “merely the spark that lit the fuse.”³⁰¹ It followed a year of tension between Israel and the PLO along the Israel-Lebanon border; tension that had, nonetheless, hitherto been tempered by the U.S.-brokered Israel-PLO ceasefire of 25 July 1981 and unjustifiably so, as this statement from Begin's government shows:

We must point out that the ceasefire of July 1981 has been interpreted in many quarters as prohibiting any and all Israeli measures against the hostile bases. While leaving the forces entrenched in these bases free to attack Israel and its citizens everywhere except one specific border. In reality this interpretation amounts to a one-sided cease-fire permitting the attacker to attack while binding the hands of the attacked party.³⁰²

³⁰¹ Malaspina, A. (2009) *Creation of the Modern Middle East*, New York: Infobase Publishing, p. 81.

³⁰² THE WISCONSIN JEWISH CHRONICLE (1982) A message from Israel. [Online] Available from: <http://www.newspapers.com/newspage/50006125/> [Accessed: 15 May, 2013].

Abu Nidal's attack gave Israel a justification to invade Lebanon, a long welcome move in the eyes of Begin and Sharon. Already on 30 May, 1982, in a private correspondence with U.S. Secretary Alexander Haig, did the latter express concern about future Israeli military actions in Lebanon and encouraged Israel to exercise military restraint. Begin found Haig's suggestion inappropriate as he thought that there "[was] in Lebanon a neo-nazi terrorist organization which constantly proclaim[ed] its design to kill [Israeli] people in Israel and abroad - men, women and children [...],"³⁰³ and he took Haig's suggestion to mean that Israel "should let [the PLO] kill [Israeli] citizens and brethren - and do nothing."³⁰⁴ Begin ensured Haig that Israel's reconnaissance flights would continue to fly over Lebanon, as "he would never expose the Jews to such danger, because of what had happened to [them] in the Past."³⁰⁵ In a private correspondence with U.S. President Reagan on 6 June, 1982, when Israel had just initiated its invasion, Begin responded in a similar fashion when Reagan encouraged Begin to still exercise military restraint. Specifically, Begin responded:

For the last seventy-two hours, twenty-three of our towns, townships and villages in Galilee have been under the constant shelling of Soviet-supplied heavy artillery and Katyusha rockets by the "P.L.O." terrorists. Tens of thousands of men, women and children remain day and night in shelters. We have suffered casualties. The terrorists are aiming their guns exclusively at the civilian population. There are many military targets in the area; these are completely "immune". The purpose of the enemy is to kill - to kill Jews; men, women and children. Is there a nation in the world that would tolerate

³⁰³ Letter, Menachem Begin to Alexander Haig, 30 May, 1982, box 13, Prime Minister's Office Collection, Israeli State Archives.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

such, a situation which, after the cessation of hostilities agreement, has repeated itself time and again?

The question is clearly answered in the most recent action of the United Kingdom which is now waging a full-fledged war eight thousand miles from its shores in the name of Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. Mr. President, the bloodthirsty aggressor against us is on our doorstep. Do we not have "the inherent right to self-defense?" Does not Article 51 of the Charter apply to us? Is the Jewish State an exception to all the rules applying to all other nations? The answer to these questions is enshrined in the questions themselves.

Begin concluded the letter with the words: "We shall do our sacred duty. So help us God."³⁰⁶ Like in his reaction to Argov's shooting, Begin's world-view shines through in his letters to both Haig and Reagan: the PLO is not merely regarded as a terrorist threat on Israel's northern border; it is viewed as an existential threat unique to the Jews, posed by terrorists *aiming their guns exclusively at the civilian population with the purpose to kill Jews; men, women and children*. Begin sees this threat is inherently anti-Semitic, similar in character to that exposed by Nazi Germany. Moreover, the Jewish state's defensive military action against the PLO is, unlike the United Kingdom's defensive invasion of the Falkland Islands, not being judged according to the international standards which grant states the inherent right to self-defense; yet another aspect in which the Jews state are being

³⁰⁶ JEWISH VIRTUAL LIBRARY (N.D.) Menachem Begin Administration: Exchange of Letters with US President Reagan, June 6, 1982). [Online]. Available from: <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/History/rmblets.html> [Accessed: February 10, 2013].

discriminated against. These examples fit logically in Begin's broader world-view and this is only reinforced by his signing off with saying *so help us God*. Begin's decision to invade Lebanon must necessarily be viewed in the context of his world-view; and, when we do so, it is possible to conceive of a role of Begin's religious beliefs in the invasion. As far as the statements above are concerned, such a role is not an explicit one; but, insofar as Begin's faith is an all-important, constitutive part of his world-view, it cannot be separated from this action which is, by all accounts, an extension of Begin's world-view and one that fits logically into his foreign policy doctrine.

It is possible to discern a more tangible role of religion in Operation Peace for Galilee if we look at the invasion, as many scholars have,³⁰⁷ more specifically as an attempt to maintain Israeli presence on Judea and Samaria by destroying the increasingly powerful and legitimate PLO leadership and, with it, a growing capacity for establishing a Palestinian state. In 1970, the PLO, under the leadership of Yassir Arafat, was expelled from Jordan and set up its new base in Southern Lebanon, an area that, as Lebanon in general, had seen an influx of Palestinian refugees dislocated by the 1967 war. This move was preceded by the Cairo Accord of November 1969, an Egyptian-brokered agreement by which Arafat and Lebanese General, Emile Bustani, agreed to PLO presence in Southern Lebanon. These developments empowered the PLO in Lebanon, making the latter a an even more powerful centre for resistance to West Bank annexation. An Israeli invasion into Lebanon would not only destroy the PLO's ability to attack Jews living in the Galilee region from its stronghold in Southern Lebanon; it would also decentralize the PLO. Removing leadership

³⁰⁷ See e.g. Farsoun, S. and Bishara, G. (1982) "Israel's Goal of Destroying the PLO is not Achievable." Interview with Samih Farsoun. *Journal of Palestine Studies*. 11/12 (4/1). p. 100-106 and Peleg, I. (1987) *Begin's Foreign Policy, 1977-1983. Israel's Move to the Right*. p. 143-95.

abilities of the PLO would depoliticize the Palestinian community, breaking it into “controllable minorities” reducing the Palestinian question to a refugee one, rather than a viable political one.³⁰⁸ It is likely that Begin saw the latter - the PLO as an viable political option - as an increasingly threatening development, given the PLO’s growing international recognition and its perceived growing moderation due, in part, to its keeping of the 1981 cease fire; factors that, altogether could make the PLO a legitimate claimant of Judea and Samaria.³⁰⁹ This is especially likely when appraised in light of media excerpts from around the time leading up to the invasion: for example, on 12 October, 1981 a Chicago Tribune article entitled *Carter, Ford urge recognition of PLO to attain Mideast peace*, stated that “Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford believe there can be no real diplomatic advances in the Middle East until the role of the Palestinian Liberation Organization is accepted” and that “both [former Presidents] went further in calling for recognition of the PLO than they ever did when they were in the White House.”³¹⁰ Carter furthermore entertained the idea of the PLO as an moderate force and the only viable leadership of the Palestinian people, stating that “Many of the PLO leaders are very moderate in abhorring terrorism and violence. I don't see any possibility of the Palestinian world, and the Arab world, of acknowledging any other leadership for the Palestinians other than the PLO.”³¹¹ Moreover, Carter partly blamed the Israelis and “their policy of installing new settlements in the occupied West Bank” for the stalemate in Middle East negotiations.³¹² In the midst of such discourse coming from none other than the U.S., Begin would be right to fear the increasingly realistic emergence of the PLO as a legitimate actor and with it, a

³⁰⁸ Farsoun, S. & Bishara, G. (1982) *Israel's Goal of Destroying the PLO is not Achievable. Interview with Samih Farsoun*. p. 103.

³⁰⁹ Peleg, I. (1987) *Begin's Foreign Policy, 1977-1983. Israel's Move to the Right*. p. 150.

³¹⁰ CHICAGO TRIBUNE (1982) Carter, Ford urge recognition of PLO to attain Mideast peace. [Online] Available from: <http://archives.chicagotribune.com/1981/10/12/page/21/article/carter-ford-urge-recognition-of-plo-to-attain-mideast-peace> [Accessed: 13 March, 2014].

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² Ibid.

growing threat to Judea and Samaria specifically. Viewing the invasion from this perspective, the religious beliefs of Begin become more discernible.

Begin's religious beliefs and public discourse

Operation Peace for Galilee's official objective to push PLO factions in Southern Lebanon, or "the terrorists," 40 kilometers beyond the Israel-Lebanon border was achieved within a few days of its launch. According to at least one first-hand account, it did so at the expense of an Israeli-operated jet, which was shot down during an air raid in Nabatiyeh on 8 June, 1982 as well as numerous Palestinian civilian casualties and wounded in the areas of Sidon, Tyre, Damour and the areas inland from those cities.³¹³ On the same day, Begin delivered the following address to the Knesset:

[...] from time to time our nation has an encounter with history. And so, our soldiers are now in Tyre. We recall Ezekiel, chapter 27, verse 8: "Thy wise men, O Tyre, were in thee, they were thy pilots." We are standing today in Sidon and we recall Isaiah, chapter 23, verse 12: "Thou shalt no more rejoice, O thou oppressed virgin daughter of Sidon." We also recall the two chapters in the Book of Kings on the friendship between Hiram, King of Tyre, and our King David, and on the alliance our King Solomon formed with the King of Tyre at the time of the construction of the First Temple. We will not be able to give Tyre what Solomon gave it, but we can give it security, peace and tranquility. And only on condition that there be peace and tranquility

³¹³ UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL (1982) A Doctor arrested in Lebanon and imprisoned told Congress...[Online] Available from: <http://www.upi.com/Archives/1982/07/13/A-doctor-arrested-in-Lebanon-and-imprisoned-told-Congress/6961395380800/>

in Nahariya, which was shelled from Tyre for many years, with Katyusha shells. No longer. All will be tranquil – both we and they.³¹⁴

In this passage, Begin invokes Biblical events during which the nation of Israel had a friendship or alliance with the cities of Tyre and Sidon in modern-day Lebanon. By invoking these events as they were relayed by the Prophets Ezekiel and Isaiah, Begin's references have a religious rather than purely historical connotation, and serve to emphasize the invasion as one of aimed at *peace, security and tranquility*. It is unclear, though not entirely unlikely, that Begin's reference to "pilots" is invoked specifically to somehow justify, in the broader context of Biblical history, the Israeli jet that was shot down on the same day in Nabatiyeh; what *is* explicit, however, is that Begin's passage as a whole is an effort to legitimize the Israeli invasion that was, on the day of this speech, unfolding violently in Southern Lebanon. Begin made a similar effort on a separate occasion, specifically in his address to the Knesset on June 29, 1982, at which point Israeli troops had moved far beyond the 40 kilometer lines and into Beirut. Speaking to the Knesset which had, at no point, knowingly agreed to this military advance, Begin stated that,

We don't want even a square millimeter of Lebanese soil. Lebanon isn't the Land of Israel. From ancient time until the end of all generations, it hasn't been the Land of Israel. We want to renew the alliance with Lebanon, as it was in ancient time between Israel and Judah and Lebanon. We will renew it. But first of all we must get rid of this scourge that isn't written in the Torah, these terrorists whom I don't even want to describe by their correct name [...] the Jewish people can exist, with God's help, only by the readiness to sacrifice on

³¹⁴ ISRAEL MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. *Statement in the Knesset by Prime Minister Begin, 8 June 1982*, Vol. 8.8: 1982-1984.

the part of our finest sons, only through willingness and self-sacrifice'.³¹⁵

As, or perhaps more than, in the previous passage, Begin makes explicitly religious references like the *Torah* and *God's help*; in this passage, too, his efforts seem to be aimed at legitimizing Israeli presence in Lebanon through such references. Additionally, by depicting it as absent from the Torah, his discourse simultaneously “religiously” delegitimizes the *scourge* (PLO). Moreover, one can sense Begin’s broader world-view of the Jewish people as one whose redemption depends on its ties with the Land of Israel, implicitly at work in this passage: through peace with neighboring Lebanon, as that which existed between ancient Israel and Judah and Lebanon, the Jewish people will be able to live, as God intends for them, on the Land of Israel. Like in the previous example, Begin gave this statement as disapproval amongst both Knesset members as well as public opinion was increasingly divided regarding Operation Peace for Galilee, which, in part, was a result of Arab propaganda proliferating harsh images from Beirut.³¹⁶ Public discontent culminated, a few days after Begin’s address to the Knesset, with an anti-government demonstration organized by the *Peace Now* movement, which rallied approximately 100,000 anti-government protesters demanding an end to the Lebanon war on the ground that it had gone beyond the 40 kilometer line initially agreed to by Knesset.³¹⁷

In the context of Begin’s public discourse vis-a-vis Operation Peace for Galilee, it is possible to discuss two roles of religion, both of them linked to legitimization and both, likely, at play simultaneously. First, religion can be understood as a discursive instrument with which Begin legitimizes the invasion into Lebanon and, especially, the violence suffered by both Israelis and Palestinians. It is notable that the excerpts above are from discourse employed around the time of

³¹⁵ ISRAEL MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, *Address in the Knesset by Prime Minister Begin, 29 June 1982*, Vol.8: 1982-1984.

³¹⁶ Shilon, Avi (2012) *Menachem Begin: A life*. New Haven: Yale University Press. p. 395-6.

³¹⁷ JEWISH TELEGRAPH AGENCY (1982) 100,000 demonstrate in Tel Aviv Against War in Lebanon. [Online] Available from: <http://www.jta.org/1982/07/06/archive/100000-demonstrate-in-tel-aviv-against-war-in-lebanon> [Accessed: 10 March, 2014].

heightened violence, as this suggests that Begin might have sought to pre-empt or respond to public disapproval that (would) occurred as a result. Shilon (2012) explains that Begin expressed “bitterness at public criticism” of IDF during Operation Peace for Galilee, an indication that he was indeed aware of the invasion’s repercussions for public opinion.³¹⁸ It makes sense that Begin would tend to religious references for legitimization purposes because, as we saw in chapter two, the Israeli public was at this time on the same ideological trajectory that had been developing since the early 1970s, something which had been confirmed to Begin shortly before when he formed his second nationalist-religious government on 5 August, 1981. Second, Begin’s religious references can be understood as an accurate reflection of his religious beliefs at the time; an understanding that becomes all the more plausible when appraised in light of his candid personality. This view would suggest that religion legitimized Operation Peace for Galilee to Begin himself by way of rendering the invasion an effort carried out for an end that was in line with God’s will.

4.5 Conclusion

Against the backdrop of material presented and analyzed throughout this chapter, we can discern two primary roles of religion in the context of Israeli foreign policy under Menachem Begin. First, Begin’s *faith* along with the shared faith of his *belief-community* - the two together forming Begin’s *religious beliefs* - shaped his world-view. Though interplaying with other variables (discussed further in thesis’ conclusion in chapter 7), this meant a worldview characterized by an ardent insistence on Israeli sovereignty over Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip in the context of the Camp David Accords and also, albeit indirectly, in his militant insistence to destroy the PLO in the context of Operation Peace for Galilee. By extension, Begin’s *faith* and *belief-community* also shaped his foreign policy doctrine, which rested on the tenets of liberating *Eretz Yisrael* and establishing full, contractual peace with neighbouring states. Equally, his worldview by

³¹⁸ Shilon, A. (2012) *Menachem Begin: A life*. p. 395.

extension shaped his two most significant foreign policy outcomes: the Camp David Accords and Operation Peace for Galilee. As the chapter has demonstrated, the relationship between Begin's religious beliefs and the foreign policy tenet of liberating *Eretz Yisrael* is more directly discernible than the tenet of establishing full, contractual peace with all of Israel's neighboring Arab states. As a result, a relationship between Begin's religious beliefs and his policy vis-a-vis Judea, Samaria and Gaza (Framework I of the Camp David Accords) is also more easily discerned, as the material presented in section 4.3 has shown. Whilst not obvious, the relationship between Begin's religious beliefs on the one hand, and his Peace Treaty with Egypt as well as his Operation Peace for Galilee, on the other, is not necessarily absent. In line with his foreign policy doctrine, Begin signed the Peace Treaty with Egypt in order to secure the Jewish people on *Eretz Yisrael*. His invasion into Lebanon was carried out for the same reason; to establish a secure neighbour on Israel's Northern border. Based on the material presented in section 4.4, the invasion was moreover intensified due to the direct threat that the PLO, as an increasingly moderate force, presented to Israeli sovereignty over key Biblical territories of *Eretz Yisrael*, Judea and Samaria. In this vein, it can convincingly be argued that, insofar as the "end goal" of Begin's foreign policy vis-a-vis both Egypt and the PLO in Lebanon was to secure the Jewish people on *Eretz Yisrael*, we can talk about an indirect relationship between Begin's religious beliefs and these foreign policy outcomes, in addition to the direct relationship between his religious beliefs and Framework I of the Camp David Accords. To be sure, it is entirely possible, indeed likely, that a decidedly secular leader employ a similar foreign policy to Begin (although that is arguably less true in the context of territorial maximalist policies vis-a-vis Judea and Samaria, which Labour leaders before and after distanced themselves from.) But, as section 4.1 detailed, Begin was not a secular leader and, given the role of religious beliefs in his worldview, his foreign policy outcomes - even those in which the relationship

to his religious beliefs are not clear - can, I argue, not be understood fully outside the context of religion.

The second role of religion is one of legitimization. While it does not feature equally intensely across the board, Begin employs religious discourse in the context of all of the foreign policy outcomes discussed in the chapter. In each context, religion seems to take on a different, often rather specific, meaning for Begin. In the context of the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty, it prescribes *peace* between nations - and implicitly acceptance of Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula, - whilst in that of Framework I of the Camp David Accords, it prescribes Jewish presence on Judea and Samaria. To be sure, these meanings should not be viewed as contradictory to one another as the land upon which Begin's religious beliefs prescribe presence, is distinct from that with which he agrees to withdraw; the different meanings of religion are nonetheless worthy of mention as they highlight the multi-faceted nature of captured by a single religious doctrine. More interestingly, perhaps is that Begin employs religious discourse at times, and in contexts, where dissenting public opinion, whether from a minority movement like Gush Emunim, or the broader public following the early stages of Operation Peace for Galilee, were particularly vocal. The timing of Begin's discourse would suggest that Begin employs religious discourse in order to legitimize the foreign policy at hand. This could plausibly be seen as an instrumental use of religion on Begin's part. In the event that such is the case, it nonetheless reflects the importance of religion, if not for Begin, then for segments of his audience in Israeli society. Given the candid manner in which Begin spoke and behaved, however, it is not entirely unlikely that his religious discourse was a genuine reflection of his religious beliefs and served not just to legitimize his foreign policy to the public, but also to himself.

CHAPTER 5

RELIGION AND FOREIGN POLICY IN IRAN UNDER AYATOLLAH RUHOLLAH KHOMEINI (1979-1989)

God Almighty has granted us His favor and destroyed the regime of arrogance by His powerful hand, which has shown itself as the power of the oppressed. [On] this blessed day, the day the Islamic community assumes leadership, the day of the victory and triumph of our people, I declare the Islamic Republic of Iran.

- Ayatollah Khomeini on the Islamic Republic of Iran's establishment on 1 April, 1979.

5.0 Introduction

While the religious beliefs of Menachem Begin may have been somewhat obscure given their interplay with historical and nationalist ones, Khomeini's life-works and discourse left room for little doubt as to his faith and dedication to Islam. Schooled in religious seminaries from an early age, Khomeini's dedication to Islam only deepened throughout his early career as a teacher of Islamic law, his position as *Marja'* (source of emulation) within the ranks of Iran's Shi'ite Islamic clergy and, in 1979, as founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran. As the opening quote of this chapter suggests, the latter occasion marked a dramatic shift from Iran's previous government and with that change came an equally dramatic shift in Iran's foreign policy. From the moment of the Islamic Republic's establishment, Iran's foreign policy would be characterized by non-alignment, tied to a vehement anti-Westernism and a focus on consolidating the Islamic Republic, and export of the Islamic Revolution beyond Iran's borders. In

this chapter, I argue - and show - that Khomeini's foreign policy doctrine was grounded solidly in his religious beliefs which were shaped by his own unswerving Islamic faith as well as the Twelver Shi'ite belief-community to which he belonged (explained in detail on p. . Khomeini's doctrine moreover reflected in his foreign policy vis-a-vis the Iran-Iraq war - particularly, his continuation of that war following Iran's nominal victory in 1982 - in that the latter sought to both consolidate the Islamic Republic and spread the Islamic Revolution; as well as in his *fatwa* against the British novelist Salman Rushdie, for the same reasons.³¹⁹

Similarly to the previous chapter, I furthermore argue that Khomeini invoked religious public discourse to legitimize himself and his foreign policy. As was the case with Begin, that discourse seems to reflect the domestic socio-political trends and conditions and, as a result, appears to be somewhat contradictory. With reference to concepts of *ijtihad* (the right to interpretation) and *maslahat* (expediency), both pertaining to the *Usuli* branch of Twelver Shi'ism to which Khomeini adhered, I argue that any contradictions in both Khomeini's discourse and behaviour should not be regarded as a deviation from his religious beliefs, but rather a logical development thereof.

³¹⁹ In addition to the Iran-Iraq war and his *fatwa* vis-a-vis Salman Rushdie, Khomeini's foreign policy was also characterized by his prolonging of the hostage crisis from 4 November, 1979 - 20 January, 1981, in which 52 Americans were held hostage in the US Embassy of Tehran for 444 days by a group of Iranian students. Though Khomeini did not instigate the hostage crisis, he later threw his support behind it before he decided to release the hostages just seconds after Jimmy Carter finished his term as US President. Though including this foreign policy decision would yield relevant and interesting findings, it is not discussed in the chapter, primarily due to issues related to time and resource constraints, and as the author evaluates that Khomeini's other two foreign policy decisions - the Iran-Iraq war and Salman Rushdie *fatwa* - suffice to substantiate the case study analysis.

5.1 Khomeini's worldview

Unlike Menachem Begin, Ruhollah Khomeini was, for the majority of his life, not a politician or a layman, but a cleric adhering to the *Usuli* branch of Shi'a Islam (what I refer to as his "belief-community"). Born into a religious family, he began to study the *Qu'ran* already at the age of six, and, as a young adult, moved to the holy city of Qom to study *Sharia* (Islamic law) and *fiqh* (jurisprudence) at the Islamic seminary. He became a *Marja'* (source of emulation)³²⁰ in 1963, after having taught and written prolifically on Islamic philosophy, law and ethics and, with book titles such as *The Disciplines of Prayer* and *Islamic Governments* (1942) and *Islamic Government* (1979), his lifeworks have left no-one in doubt of his devotion to Islam. Western observers have described him as "the embodiment of an Islamic religious leader,"³²¹ but this statement hardly does justice to the extraordinary appeal that he had amongst many Muslims in Iran and beyond. As scenes from his return to Iran from exile on 1 February, 1979 and his funeral on 6 June ten years later - both of which gathered people by the millions - bear witness to, Iranians had an intense and emotional devotion to Khomeini, some viewing him as almost superhuman;³²² a sentiment that is moreover reflected in the people's reference to him as *Imam* which is a title traditionally reserved in Shi'a Islam for the rightful, blood-related successors of the Prophet Muhammad.³²³ In his biography of Khomeini, Moin (1999) furthermore writes that "housewives and high officials alike would often burst into tears as soon as Khomeini opened his mouth, or into laughter when he told an

³²⁰ The *Marja'* label is provided only to the Ayatollah, a Shi'a authority of the highest level, who has the authority to make legal decisions pertaining to *Sharia*, serving, moreover, as a source that is to be emulated by lay people as well as clerics with less authority.

³²¹ AL JAZEERA (2014) *Ayatollah Khomeini: A rare encounter with a true revolutionary*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/02/ayatollah-khomeini-rare-encounte-20142354756879470.html> [Accessed: 3 February 2014].

³²² Kurzman, C. (2004) *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran*. Cambridge, MA. and London, UK: Harvard University Press. p. 67.

³²³ OXFORD ISLAMIC STUDIES ONLINE (2015) Khomeini, Ruhollah al-Musavi. [Online] Available from: <http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t236/e0457> [Accessed: September 10, 2014].

entertaining story,"³²⁴ which equally speaks of an emotional relationship between Khomeini and his followers in Iran.

Though ardent in much of his public discourse in his insistence that Muslims ought to unite across Islam's denominations, the belief-community to which Khomeini belonged was of a specific interpretive strand, namely Twelver Shi'ism; a branch of Shi'a Islam which developed following Islam's Sunni-Shi'a split soon after the Prophet Muhammad's death in 632. Like Shi'ism in general, it holds that the Prophet's rightful successor, and thus leader of the Islamic community, must be of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (People of the House); that is, of the Prophet's blood-line. Shi'ism therefore considers Ali, Prophet Muhammad's son-in-law and cousin, as the first *Imam* following the Prophet.³²⁵ It furthermore holds the third *Imam*, Hussayn, in particularly high regard given his courageous confrontation with Yazid I, the ruling Caliph of Ummayyad caliphate,³²⁶ in 680 AD, on the grounds that the latter's rule was un-Islamic. Their confrontation at Karbala³²⁷ culminated in Imam Hussayn's beheading and the death of his seventy-two followers; in spite of this defeat, the Battle of Karbala is upheld as an example of Imam Hussayn's integrity and, to this day, commemorated yearly in Shi'a communities in Iran and beyond. Specific to Twelver Shi'ism is a belief that twelve *Imams*, from Ali onwards, rightfully succeeded the Prophet Muhammad as leader of the Islamic community. Of highest importance, the twelfth *Imam* is believed to be the *Mahdi* (the divinely guided Savior Imam) who went into occultation and will return at an unknown point in the future, alongside *Isa* (Jesus) to fulfill their joint mission of bringing justice on Earth.³²⁸ Until then,

³²⁴ Moin, B. (1999) *Khomeini: Life of the Ayatollah*. New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd. p. 253.

³²⁵ This is distinct from Islam's Sunni branch, whose followers consider Abu Bakr the first rightful leader of the early Islamic community, following the Prophet Muhammad, based on his relation to the Prophet as his most senior companion as well as his father-in-law.

³²⁶ The Ummayyad caliphate was one of four major Islamic caliphates which were established following the Prophet Muhammad's death in 632 AD.

³²⁷ Karbala is a city southwest of Baghdad in present-day Iraq.

³²⁸ This overview of Shi'ism and Twelver Shi'ism is based largely on Abdulaziz, A. S. (1981) *Islamic Messianism: The Idea of Mahdi in Twelver Shi'ism*. Albany: State University of New York Press. p. 53.

the question of who should be entrusted with authority over the Islamic community has been debated in the Twelver Shi'a tradition. To Khomeini, that authority belonged to an Islamic jurist of the highest stature, a position he developed during his sixteen year long forced exile in Najaf,³²⁹ and one that would comprise the constitutional basis of Iran following the Islamic Revolution of 1979.

Khomeini's position on the leadership question is captured in the concept of *Velayat-e Faqih* (Rule of the Islamic jurist), as is his worldview more broadly. *Velayat-e Faqih*, which Khomeini presented over a series of lectures on Islamic government, developed around Khomeini's belief that *Sharia*, as it contains instruction for all human affairs, should form the juridical basis of society, and the *faqih* (Islamic jurist), unsurpassed in knowledge of Islamic justice, should be the ultimate authority of the system.³³⁰ As Khomeini suggests in the following excerpts from one of his lectures on Islamic Government, this system was desirable as it emulated that led by Prophet Muhammad, in the seventh century:

God made the prophet the ruler of all the faithful and his rule included even the individual who was to succeed him. After the prophet, the imam became the ruler. The significance of their rule is that their legal order applied to all and that the appointment of, control over and, when necessary, dismissal of judges and provincial rulers was in their hands.

[...] The jurisprudents have been appointed by God to rule and the
jurisprudent must act as much as possible in accordance with his
assignment.³³¹

³²⁹ Khomeini was exiled to Najaf by the Shah in 1963.

³³⁰ Algar, H. (trans. and ed.) (1981) *Islam and revolution: writings and declarations of Imam Khomeini*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: Mizan Press. p. 28-40.

³³¹ Khomeini, A. R. (1979) *Islamic government, Joint Publications Research Service translation*. New York: Manor Books, Inc. p. 41
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Equally desirable was a society without injustice, corruption and oppression by the powerful, as well as one above the influence of foreign and anti-Islamic powers, which only a society governed by *Velayat-e faqih*, could facilitate:

The Moslems will never at any tie attain justice, security and stability until they acquire full faith and virtuous ethics under the canopy of a just government that follows the laws of Islam and dispenses with everything else.³³⁰

It is notable that Khomeini's conceptualization of *Velayat-e faqih* was a dramatic re-thinking of the concept in its traditional form, by which clerical jurisdiction pertained only to orphans, widows and the mentally weak.³³² Similarly, Khomeini's *Velayat-e faqih* was markedly different than his previous ideas about government which as per his book *The Revealing of Secrets* (1944), included a limited monarchical government under the Iranian constitution of 1906.³³³ Generally, Khomeini's writings and seminary teaching throughout the 1940s and 1950s refrained from interfering with politics; a behaviour in line with the political quietism advocated by the, then, leading *Marja'*, Seyyed Hossein Borujerdi. When Khomeini succeeded Boroujerdi, shortly after the latter's death in 1961, his political involvement increased, especially in the form of staunch critique of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi's modernization programme.³³⁴ Also during his "political" period, which lasted until his death in 1989, did Khomeini show inconsistent interpretations of *Sharia*. His stance on women's suffrage, for example, changed from condemnation in 1963, when he issued a fatwa contradicting Muhammad Reza Shah's granting of women's right to vote; to support thereof following the 1979 revolution, when he announced that women had a

³³² Moin, B. (1999) *Khomeini: Life of the Ayatollah*. New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd. p. 157-8.

³³³ Martin, V. (2000) *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*. London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd. p. 129-31.

³³⁴ Khomeini's critique of the Shah led to his exile in Iraq and later France.

duty to participate in all elections.³³⁵ The same was the case with his stance vis-a-vis state tax and mandatory military service - state laws which he condemned prior to assuming his role as *Faqih*, shortly after he issued a *fatwa* instructing all citizens to do the opposite.³³⁶ Similarly, he once considered the consumption of sturgeon *haram* (sinful), only to subsequently issue a *fatwa* declaring it *halal* (permissible).³³⁷ Khomeini's seemingly inconsistent interpretations of *Sharia* continued throughout his rule as *Faqih* of the Islamic Republic of Iran in its first decade. Indeed, one of the most respected authorities on Khomeini's domestic and foreign policy, Rouhallah Ramazani, has argued that Khomeini's "career" as *Faqih* reveals "complex mixture of idealism and realism" whereby "Khomeini himself [kept] changing the Khomeini line."³³⁸ Ramazani further explains that, "under one set of circumstances, [Khomeini] contributed to Iran's international isolation and under another has led the campaign to break that isolation down."³³⁹

Far from being unaware of, or denying, inconsistencies in his rulings and behaviour, Khomeini explicitly acknowledged them, as in his speech below to the Council of Guardians.³⁴⁰ Addressing his initial promise that religious personalities would be a temporary, rather than permanent, presence in the Islamic government, he said:

[The fact that] I had said something does not mean that I should be bound by my word. I am saying that for as long as we have not implemented all

³³⁵ THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY (2011) *Nuclear Fatwa: Religion and Politics in Iran's Proliferation Strategy*. Available from: <http://www.pewforum.org/2007/05/30/a-six-day-war-its-aftermath-in-american-public-opinion/>. [Accessed: December 6, 2013]. p. 19.

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ Ramazani, R. K. (1989) Iran's Foreign Policy: Contending Orientations, *Middle East Journal*, 43 (2). p. 211.

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ The Council of Guardians is a non-elected body comprised of six theologians and six civilian jurists, whose significant privileges, during Khomeini's leadership, included authority to veto interpretations of the constitution and supervise elections to the presidency and *Majlis* (parliament) as well as approving legislation passed by the latter to ensure its "Islamicity."

Islamic rules and have no competent people to do the job, the clergy should stay in their positions. It is below the dignity of a clergyman to be a president or to occupy other posts. He does it because it is a duty. We have to implement Islam and should not fear anyone.³⁴¹

In a speech of July 1981, he communicated a similarly flexible stance vis-a-vis *Sharia*, when he announced to Khomeini the Revolutionary Guards³⁴² that,

Islamic law exists to serve the interests of the Muslim community and of Islam. [Therefore,] to save Muslim lives and for the sake of Islam's survival it is obligatory to lie, it is obligatory to drink wine [if necessary].

Similarly, in his 1987 speech addressed to then President Ali Khamenei, Khomeini expressed that,

[...] The government can unilaterally abrogate any religious agreement made by it with the people if it believes that the agreement is against the interests of the country and Islam. The government can prevent any Islamic law - whether related to rituals or not - from being implemented if it sees its implementation as harmful to the interests of Islam.³⁴³

³⁴¹ Khomeini cited in Moin (1999) *Khomeini: Life of the Ayatollah*. p. 247-8.

³⁴² The Islamic Republic of Iran's Revolutionary Guard, also known as The Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution, is a wing of the Republic's Armed Forces but, unlike the latter, it does not guard borders. Rather, it is focused of guarding the Islamic system of Iran, preventing non-Islamic movements and behaviour from emerging.

³⁴³ THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY (2011) *Nuclear Fatwa: Religion and Politics in Iran's Proliferation Strategy*. Available from: <http://www.pewforum.org/2007/05/30/a-six-day-war-its-aftermath-in-american-public-opinion/>. [Accessed: December 6, 2013].

Observant voices further substantiate Khomeini's inconsistent proclamations: for example, Meisam Koohsari, a 30 year-old engineer who lives and works in his native Tehran, says of Khomeini's inconsistent approach to domestic and foreign politics that "[Khomeini] had good intentions, but his plan was unrealistic, so it changed."³⁴⁴ Along similar lines, Richard Falk who, as chair of an American committee opposed to U.S. intervention in Iran was invited to visit Khomeini immediately prior to the latter's return to Iran in February 1979, recounts in his reflections on his meeting with the Ayatollah: "Did Khomeini change the conception of his role upon returning to Iran, or did he hide from us either consciously or unconsciously his real game plan? As far as I know, no one has provided a credible explanation."³⁴⁵ The answer to Falk's question, and explanation behind the preceding quotes as well as Khomeini's shift from political quietism in the 1960s, lies neither in his indecisiveness nor in his disingenuity. Western journalists who have met him describe him as exhibiting "great strength of mind and will" as well as an "active mind and sharp intelligence."³⁴⁶ His family furthermore characterizes him as exceedingly conscientious. His daughter, Farida Mustafayi, for example, describes him as "very strict in principles"³⁴⁷ and says that "[...] even his passion as a father or husband [...] could never convince him to do something he thought was wrong. His word never changed. [...]."³⁴⁸

Similarly, his son, Hojatol Islam Seyyed Ahmad Khomeini, recounts that "[Khomeini's] best characteristic was his honesty. He would never say something outside and something else at home. [His] behaviour outside was the same as his behaviour inside plus some formality"³⁴⁹ and

³⁴⁴ Meisam, K. (2014) Interviewed by Magdalena C. Delgado. In Tehran, Iran. August 11, 2014.

³⁴⁵ AL JAZEERA (2014) *Ayatollah Khomeini: A rare encounter with a true revolutionary*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/02/ayatollah-khomeini-rare-encounte-20142354756879470.html> [Accessed: 3 February 2014].

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ Sabzian, A. A.(n.d.) *Ruhollah's Lifestyle: A Brief Look at Family Lifestyle of Imam Khomeini*. Islamic Culture and Relations Organization. p. 61.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 47

³⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 79.

that although very emotional, “[Khomeini’s] emotion never influenced his decisions”.³⁵⁰ The latter is seconded by Hojjatol Islam Imam Jamarani who says that “[the Ayatollah’s] moral never changed even up to the last moments [...]”.³⁵¹

Khomeini’s inconsistent interpretations of Islam and *Sharia* should rather be appraised in the context of the *Usuli* interpretive tradition of Shi’ism and the various concepts that it has given rise to. The *Usuli* interpretive strand of Shi’a Islam emerged “victorious” in the 1600s after a centuries-long debate about *ijtihad* (the right to interpretation) between *Usuli* and *Akhbaris*. Adherents of those interpretive strands respectively held that the *Mujtahed* (highest learned Shi’a clergy) ought to base its interpretations of Islamic law on current social and political circumstances; and, conversely, that, following the death of the twelfth imam, the *hadiths* (the tradition of words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad) were the only authority of *Fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence).³⁵² Indeed, it was the *Usulis’* victory which paved the way for the creation of the modern Shi’i clergy that Khomeini studied to join from a young age. That *ijtihad* is part and parcel of Khomeini’s interpretive approach is also evident various places in the Islamic Republic’s constitution of 1979, of which he was the main architect. Article 5 of Constitution, for example, states that “During the occultation of the *Wali al-‘Asr* (the twelfth of the infallible imams), the leadership of the *Ummah* (Muslim community) devolve upon the just and pious person, who is fully aware of the circumstances of his age [...]”.³⁵⁰ That a leader should be *fully aware of the circumstances of his age*, is a clear reference to the *Usuli* tradition, which holds that, only the *Mujtahed* (clergy experts in Islamic jurisprudence), and later, in the mid-nineteenth century, the centralized leadership *Marja-e taqlid* (the source of imitation), had the right to *ijtihad*, and each believer had to follow their interpretations.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 96.

³⁵¹ Ibid., p. 115.

³⁵² Raket, E. P. (2007) Iranian Foreign Policy since the Iranian Islamic Revolution: 1979-2006. *Perspectives of Global Development and Technology*. 6. p. 161-63.

From the *Usuli* premise, it follows that interpretations of Islamic law necessarily wax and wane as changes in the social and political environment occur, even if such interpretations seem at odds with one another. Indeed, as Lincoln (1985) shows, distinct interpretations of Shi'ism have promoted sentiments as different as quietism and rebellion that, respectively, have supported and protested status quo governments. In times where the clergy has implicitly and explicitly rallied behind temporal powers through political quietism, as Boroujerdi did, they have done so by, for example, arguing that a world change cannot be hurried but can come only through the return of the *Mahdi* (the prophesied redeemer of Islam). In times where the clergy has incited protest against temporal powers, as Khomeini did before and during the Islamic revolution, it conversely invoked the *Mahdi* to argue that disorder is a sign that that the redeemer's return is nearing. In a similar vein, Imam Hussein's martyrdom was, prior to the 1979 revolution, invoked to present the latter as an interceder for the people and God, someone who "somehow helped [people] overcome their own incomprehensible family losses."³⁵³ This presentation of the Imam Hussein is distinct from that during the revolution, when he was held up as a courageous activist "leading a battle against odds in order to establish justice."³⁵⁴

The *Usuli* tradition has moreover given rise to specific concepts, developed throughout history, to safeguard Shi'ism in general and, later, the Islamic Republic. *Taqiyya* (caution, fear or avoidance), for example, developed from the need of Shi'a communities, as historically —persecuted minorities, to defend themselves against persecutors by deceiving the latter about their faith, in order that Shi'ism survive as a Muslim denomination. Accordingly, *taqiyya* promotes the engagement of Shi'a Muslim individuals or communities in deception for the sake

³⁵³ Lincoln, B. (1985) *Religion, Rebellion, Revolution*. In Keddie, N. R. (1995) *Iran and the Muslim World*. New York: New York University Press. p. 157-8.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

of self-protection.³⁵⁵ Similarly, *maslahat* (expediency) allows for governments to reconcile traditional *Sharia* with demands posed by contemporary social and political circumstances, if it is deemed that doing so is in the interest of the state and of its people.³⁵⁶ Unlike in Sunni Islam, where *Muftis* (Muslim legal experts) have employed *maslahat* for centuries, Shi'ism officially opposed the concept until 1988, when Khomeini broke publicly granted permission for the *vali* (Guardian Jurist), to adopt *maslahat*,³⁵⁷ affirming that “*Sharia* is not binding for the jurist ruler, who has the right to ignore prayer and other rituals (known as the Pillars of Islam) in favour of the regime’s needs”,³⁵⁸ and even the *vali*’s “authority to destroy a mosque [if] rendered necessary by the “expediency” or “interests” of the regime.”³⁵⁸ Moreover, Khomeini revised the Islamic Republic’s constitution to include an important role for the newly formed Expediency Council whose purpose would be to advise the Supreme Leader on matters of regime expediency, as well as serving as a point of mediation between the, often pragmatic-leaning, parliament, and the largely traditionalist Guardian Council. This meant that post-1988 legislation of the Islamic Republic became grounded in expediency rather than Islamic law, though, as Khomeini’s speech excerpts above, as well as his behaviour under the leadership of Boroujerdi show, Khomeini operated, rather explicitly, according to *maslahat* principles long throughout his leadership and, before that, within a similar pragmatism advocated by *Usuli* tradition.

³⁵⁵ THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY (2011) *Nuclear Fatwa: Religion and Politics in Iran’s Proliferation Strategy*. Available from: <http://www.pewforum.org/2007/05/30/a-six-day-war-its-aftermath-in-american-public-opinion/>. [Accessed: December 6, 2013]. p. 17.

³⁵⁶ Figg-Franzoi, L. (2011) *Maslahat, the state and the people: opium use in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Crime, Law and Social Change*. 56 (4). p. 421-38.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid*.

³⁵⁸ THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY (2011) *Nuclear Fatwa: Religion and Politics in Iran’s Proliferation Strategy*. Available from: <http://www.pewforum.org/2007/05/30/a-six-day-war-its-aftermath-in-american-public-opinion/>. [Accessed: December 6, 2013]. p. 22.

5.2 Ayatollah Khomeini's Foreign Policy Doctrine

Khomeini's worldview, as it had taken form by the time of the Iranian revolution of 1979, translated into a foreign policy doctrine that was premised on two main principles of non-alignment and spread of the Islamic revolution beyond Iran.

“Neither East nor West, but the Islamic Republic”

The first of these, non-alignment, is captured by Khomeini's slogan “Neither East nor West, but the Islamic Republic,” which also reflects his belief, outlined above, in the necessity to prevent influence of foreign, un-Islamic powers in order that an Islamic Republic may form and thrive. As he put it himself, “We must become isolated in order to become independent.”³⁵⁹ In his discourse, Khomeini furthermore draws a clear connection between this foreign policy tenet and Islam. In his announcement of the Iran-Iraq war's termination, for example, he proclaimed,

O' God! You are aware that we do not collude even for a moment with America, the Soviet Union and other global powers, and that we consider collusion with superpowers and other powers as turning our back on Islamic principles.³⁶⁰

That relations with global powers should equate *turning [Iran's] back on Islamic principles*, suggests, if directly states, that the *Neither East nor West* part of his foreign policy principle was grounded in the view that Islam required rejection of un-Islamic powers. This view is also discernible in Khomeini's speech on 8 February, 1981 to a group of air personnel, whom he

³⁵⁹ Walt, S. (1997) *Revolution and War*. New York: Cornell University Press. p. 265.

³⁶⁰ COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS (n.d.) Letter from Ayatollah Khomeini regarding weapons during the Iran-Iraq war. [Online] Available from: <http://www.cfr.org/iran/letter-ayatollah-khomeini-regarding-weapons-during-iran-iraq-war/p11745> [Accessed: 1 February 2014].

spoke to about his suspicion that some revolutionaries would attempt to exploit the Islamic revolution for their personal gain. He warned air personnel to be aware of

[...] political methods advocated by those who might approach [them], who might infiltrate [them], may divert [them] from the path [they] are taking, the path of Islam you adopted after rejecting Satan.³⁶¹

Here, Khomeini implicitly states that rejection of Satan (that is, the U.S. embodied in Mohammad Reza Pahlavi) led his air personnel audience, in this case, on to the path of Islam.

Along with the previous statement, this suggests that rejection of foreign influence, particularly American, is a religiously righteous action. In the following excerpt from *Islamic Government* (1979), Khomeini furthermore accounts for the part of his *Neither East nor West* foreign policy principle which stresses *the Islamic Republic*, by linking the establishment and consolidation of the latter, to the rejection of un-Islamic powers:

We must fight the rule of the false god because God has ordered us to do so and has proscribed obedience to false gods or joining their bandwagons. The unjust authorities must vacate their place for the Islamic public services so that a stable and legitimate Islamic government may be established gradually.³⁶²

³⁶¹ TEHRAN DOMESTIC SERVICE IN PERSIAN (1981) *Khomeyni Address*. Foreign Broadcasting International Service. [SAS081-026].

³⁶² Khomeini, R. (Joint Publications Research Service translation) (1979) *Islamic Government*. New York: Manor Books, Inc. p. 114.

Khomeini's reference to *the rule of the false god* presumably refers to secularism and the *unjust authorities* to Pahlavi's constitutional monarchy and, given Khomeini's ever-present anti-American sentiment, likely also to the U.S. In proclaiming that [God] *has proscribed obedience to [these] false gods*, Khomeini explicitly links rejection of the Shah, and presumably also the U.S, to religion and, moreover, legitimizes any such action by stating that it will lead to a *stable and legitimate* Islamic government. Khomeini would further legitimize this message by drawing on references from historical Shi'ism, as in the following passage from *Islamic Government* (1979):

[the tyrannical authorities'] rule was futile and they were aware that 'Ali's descendants would claim the caliphate wherever they happened to be and would seek resolutely to form the Islamic government as part of their duties in life.³⁶³

As above, Khomeini rejects the notion of un-Islamic rule, equating it here with *tyranny* and reinforces the righteousness of Islamic government, by invoking the most revered figures (apart from the Prophet) in Shi'a history: Ali and his descendants. His reference to the establishment of an Islamic Government as *part of [the] duties in life* of Ali's descendants furthermore confirms that Khomeini saw, and encouraged other to see, such a government as a reflection of God's will.

"Export the Revolution"

~~The second principle of Khomeini's foreign policy doctrine was to export the Islamic Revolution, which he saw as a means to liberate oppressed people beyond Iran and, ultimately, establish an Islamic world order. This principle was based on Khomeini's view of an Islam that~~

³⁶³ Ibid. p. 115.

knew no borders; in his words, Islam “is not peculiar to a country [...] even the Muslims.”³⁶⁴ Rather, “Islam comes for humanity [wishing] to bring all humanity under the umbrella of justice [...]”³⁶⁵ As the only *faqih*-ruled Islamic Republic, Khomeini held that Iran “should try hard to export its revolution to the world”³⁶⁶ and stressed that since “the export of idea by force is not export”,³⁶⁷ the Islamic Revolution should rather be exported by setting an example of Islamic ethical behaviour. He expressed this rationale on numerous occasions, including the following excerpt from his public speech on the eve of the Iranian New Year in 1980: We should try hard to export our revolution to the world. We should set aside the thought that we do not export our revolution, because Islam does not regard various Islamic countries differently and is the regard various Islamic countries differently and is the supporter of all the oppressed people of the world. If we remain in an enclosed environment, we shall definitely face defeat.³⁶⁸

The foreign policy principle of exporting the revolution also came to be part of the preamble of the Islamic Republic’s 1979 constitution, of which Khomeini was the primary architect:

[...] in the development of international relations, the Constitution will strive with other Islamic and popular movements to prepare the way for the formation of a single world community (in accordance with the Koranic verse “This your community is a single community, and I am your Lord, so worship Me” [21:92]), and to assure the continuation of the

³⁶⁴ Khomeini cited in Ramazani, R. K. (1989), *Iran’s Foreign Policy: Contending Orientations*, *Middle East Journal*, 43 (2), p. 208.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

³⁶⁸ Joyner, C. C. (ed.) (1990) *The Persian Gulf War: Lessons for Strategy, Law, and Diplomacy*. Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group. p. 31.

struggle for the liberation of all deprived and oppressed peoples in the world...).³⁶⁹

Similarly to the previous references to Khomeini's discourse, this passage from the Republic's constitution, specifically its reference the Koranic verse promulgating *a single* [world] *community* discerns a link between Islam, on the one hand, and the *export of the revolution* principle, on the other. Khomeini-observers have similar takes; Shapour Bakhtier, for example, who was the last Prime Minister of Iran under Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and attempted to contain Khomeini's ascension to power by making various conciliatory gestures, has said that the Ayatollah's idea of exporting the evolution made the latter appear as "[...] one of those Muslims who want[s] to establish a world empire [and who considered] himself the pope of the Muslims."³⁷⁰ Similarly, Mehdi Bazargan, who Khomeini appointed as the head of the Islamic Republic's interim government, has interpreted the Ayatollah's foreign policy as based on a "[belief] in the service of Islam by means of Iran" as distinct from Bazargan's own belief in "the service of Iran by means of Islam".³⁷¹

Khomeini's foreign policy doctrine, underpinned by the *Neither East nor West, but the Islamic Republic and Export of the Islamic Revolution* explained here, reflected in his foreign policy throughout the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88) which, although initially a defensive war, sought to both consolidate the Islamic Republic and to spread the Revolution, particularly after 1982. Khomeini's foreign policy doctrine also reflected in the Salman Rushdie affair, which served the similar purpose of strengthening the Islamic Republic amidst public dissent and governmental disputes, as well as spreading the Revolution through galvanizing Muslims worldwide. The

³⁶⁹ ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN (1979), *Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran; Preamble 'The Form of Government in Iran'* [Online]. Available from: [https://faculty.unlv.edu/pwerth/Const-Iran\(abridge\).pdf](https://faculty.unlv.edu/pwerth/Const-Iran(abridge).pdf). [Accessed: 10 September, 2014.]

³⁷⁰ TEHRAN DOMESTIC SERVICE IN PERSIAN (1979) Bakhtier criticizes Khomeyni in interview. Foreign Broadcasting International Service. [MEA-79-219].

³⁷¹ Bazargan cited in Ramazani, R. K. (1989). Iran's Foreign Policy: Contending Orientations. *Middle East Journal*. 43 (2). p. 205.

following sections (5.3 and 5.4) discusses both of these foreign policy outcomes with in the context of Khomeini's religious beliefs.

5.3 The Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988)

The relationship between Iraq and Iran had been plagued by border disputes for many years and, following Iran's revolution of 1979, Iraqi Baath leadership, under Saddam Hussein, felt itself increasingly vulnerable to an uprising within its own Shi'a population as well as the emergence of Iran as a dominant power in the Persian Gulf. Taking advantage of Iran's post-revolutionary domestic turmoil and declining economic situation, Saddam Hussein sent warplanes to attack airfields in Iran on 22 September 1980, and, with that offensive, initiated what would become an eight year long conflict between the two neighboring states, and the longest-running conventional war of the twentieth century. Iran fought a defensive war until June 1982, when Iraqi forces had been pushed back from occupied Iranian territories. Rather than ending the war following this victory, Khomeini opted to launch a series of offensives³⁷² which took the war into Iraq; a move widely interpreted as a means to consolidate both a government and nation which were still adapting to the post-revolutionary status quo. In 1988, after having dismissed many opportunities to do the same, Khomeini accepted a UN-brokered ceasefire, a decision he characterized as "more deadly than taking poison."³⁷² He did so despite his consistent insistence on "War, War, until Victory;"³⁷³ a goal which he desired in the first place, largely because it would enable Iran to export its revolution to its neighboring, and largely Shi'a inhabited, Iraq.

³⁷² NEW YORK TIMES (1988) *Khomeini Accepts 'Poison' of Ending the War with Iraq; U.N. Sending Mission*. [Online] 21st July. Available from <http://www.nytimes.com/1988/07/21/us/khomeini-accepts-poison-of-ending-the-war-with-iraq-un-sending-mission.html> [Accessed: 30 March, 2014]

³⁷³ See i.e. NEW YORK TIMES (1981) *Khomeini Rebuffs Iraq and Urges War Until 'Victory'* [Online] 29th January. Available from: <http://www.nytimes.com/1981/01/29/world/khomeini-rebuffs-iraq-and-urges-war-until-victory.html> [Accessed: 29th March, 2014] and NEW YORK TIMES (1987) *Khomeini, In First Speech In 3 Months, Pledges War Until Victory*. [Online] 10th February. Available from <http://www.nytimes.com/1987/02/11/world/khomeini-in-first-speech-in-3-months-pledges-war-until-victory.html> [Accessed: 29 March, 2014]

Not surprisingly, Khomeini employed religious discourse throughout the war, which, as the following analysis will show, revolved around a number of specific themes, including *jihad* and martyrdom.

From the initial stages of the Iran-Iraq war, and all throughout, Khomeini labelled the latter a *jihad*, through statements such as “Islam has ordered us to defend and wage jihad.”³⁷⁴ Nearing the war’s end, in February 1987, Khomeini employed similarly religiously charged discourse by depicting the war as a “holy crusade” and stating that Iran was battling for a “divine cause” in the war.³⁷⁵ The following excerpt is a good example of such discourse:

Can anyone who believes in the world beyond be afraid? [...] We must thank God if He confers on us the honor of dying in the Holy Battle. Let us thrust our way into the ranks of the martyrs in our hordes...if we have been afraid, this means that we don’t believe in the world beyond”.³⁷⁶

The effectiveness of such discourse is reflected in, for example, the following account of a former child volunteer of the human wave:³⁷⁷

On the television [...] they would show a young boy dressed as a soldier, carrying a gun and wearing the red headband of the Basij.³⁷⁸ He would say how wonderful it was to be a soldier for Islam, fighting for freedom

³⁷⁴ Khomeini cited in Gieling S. (1999) *Religion and War in Revolutionary Iran*. New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd. p. 44.

³⁷⁵ [NEW YORK TIMES (1987) *Khomeini, in first speech in 3 months, pledges war until victory*, Associated Press [Online] 11th February. Available from: <http://www.nytimes.com/1987/02/11/world/khomeini-in-first-speech-in-3-months-pledges-war-until-victory.html> [Accessed: 7 August 2014].

³⁷⁶ Reuter, C. (2004) *My Life is a Weapon: A Modern History of Suicide Bombing*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. p. 44.

³⁷⁷ “Human wave” refers to attacks were led by thousands of volunteers from Basij - typically young boys from peasant, working and middle class families - who cleared minefields by walking over them, in order to draw the enemy’s fire. The ‘human wave’ tactic was well-known as part of Iran’s offensives.

³⁷⁸ The Basij were a paramilitary militia, comprising of mostly young, civilian volunteers, to fight in the Iran-Iraq war.

against the Iraqis. Then he would curse the Iraqis and all Arabs saying they were not good Muslims. Next he would tell us to join him and come to the war.³⁷⁹

That this young boy should see himself as *a soldier for Islam* [who was] *fighting for freedom against the Iraqis* suggests that he experienced the war as a *jihad*. The boy's remark that *the Iraqis and all Arabs [...] were not good Muslims* furthermore points at the theme, highlighted by scholars time and again, that Khomeini incessantly referred to Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi soldiers as *kuffar* (unbelievers), perhaps, as a way to overcome the perception of fight fellow Muslims (including Sunni Muslims, who, as discussed previously, he stressed unity with.) Gieling (1999) argues that Khomeini employed such discourse which presented Hussein as *kuffar* and the war in general as one between Islam and infidelity, in order to "get around" the Islamic Law, which, she holds, forbids Muslims to go to war with one another. While that option cannot, of course, be dismissed entirely, I would rather argue that, given Khomeini's unswerving faith and the connection between his religious beliefs and his foreign policy tenets, it is more likely that he either genuinely viewed Saddam Hussein and the broader Iraqi enemy as an infidel one; *or*, that he employed the concept of *maslahat* by which he could rightfully reconcile traditional *Sharia* rulings (such as the illegality of fighting a fellow Muslim) with demands posed by contemporary social and political circumstances, when doing so - as was the case during the war - is in the interest of the state and of its people.³⁸⁰

Going back to his previous statement, Khomeini - apart from sanctifying the war by depicting it as a *Holy Battle*, he, by stating *Let us thrust our way in the ranks of the martyrs*, moreover

³⁷⁹ Moin, B. (1999) *Khomeini: Life of the Ayatollah*. p. 249-50.

³⁸⁰ Figg-Franzoi, L. (2011) *Maslahat, the state and the people: opium use in the Islamic Republic of Iran*. *Crime, Law and Social Change*. 56 (4). p. 421-38.

encourages martyrdom; another theme which runs throughout his war discourse and that is, as we saw above, especially familiar to Muslims of the Shi'a Islamic tradition. In the following quotes, Khomeini engages at length with this theme:

You are right just like the Imam, Lord of the Martyrs, was in the right and became superior with so few in number. Although he was martyred together with his sons, he revived Islam and brought disgrace on Yaazid and the Umayyad dynasty.³⁸¹

In this excerpt, Khomeini legitimizes martyrdom by invoking key reference points of the Shi'a tradition: *Lord of the Martyrs* refers to Imam Hussein, Shi'ism's most revered figure after the Prophet Muhammad; and, the celebrated *disgrace* that he brought on *Yaazid and the Ummayyad dynasty* implicitly refers to the Battle of Karbala, the battle in which he was killed and which, until this day, is commemorated yearly on Iranian streets and theaters during Ashura³⁸² to show respect of the martyrdom that Imam Hussein endured for the sake of Islam. By invoking the Karbala Battle and moreover stressing that fighters of the Iran-Iraq war *are right just like the Imam*, Khomeini uses the righteousness of Imam Hussein, which holds undisputed emotional appeal amongst Iranians, to foster support and participation in the war against Iraq. This message was reinforced further by street-propaganda in the form of large posters of celebrated martyrs hanging on buildings throughout Iran, some of which remain throughout the country today. Moreover, the effectiveness of Khomeini's encouragement of martyrdom is reflected in material

in Tehran's Martyr Museum, a museum established to commemorate martyrs of the war, which displays personal memorabilia of the war martyrs, laid out next to a short biography of each. In

³⁸¹ Ayatollah Khomeini cited in Gieling S. (1999) *Religion and War in Revolutionary Iran*. p. 116-7.

³⁸² Ashura, or Day of Remembrance, refers to the tenth day of Muharram (month in the Islamic calendar) which Shi'a Muslims commemorate as a day of mourning for Imam Hussayin's martyrdom.

the case of virtually all martyrs, a small pocket-sized *Qu'ran* was amongst their limited possessions, indicating that they subscribed to the notion of fighting, and possibly dying, for Islam.

Khomeini would continue to sanctify and legitimize the Iran-Iraq war throughout its course by invoking themes like *jihad* and *martyrdom*. But, as the war dragged on and socio-economic conditions deteriorated, his discourse would become infused with references to modern concepts like “nations” and “nationalism” that seem a out of line with the Islamic world order that he had hitherto advocated. The excerpt below from Khomeini’s speech to a group of Iranian teachers in April 1983, is a good example of this:

The Iranian nation and the inhabitants of dear Dezful³⁸³ continue to resist calamity and suffering [...] Those who make false claims to support the people are harming the Iranian people. Those who are treating the great ulema of Iran, the beloved great figures of Iran and its great scholars, in such a manner, who are resorting to terrorism against all classes and maintaining their bond of friendship with the Saddam government, which has committed such crimes against Iran, which has committed such a great crime against Dezful - these people have already shown their true face to the world.³⁸⁴

³⁸³ Deyzful, capital of Dezful County in Iran’s Khuzestan Province, was the battlefield of a major clash between Iranian and Iraqi forces in 1981.

³⁸⁴ TEHRAN DOMESTIC SERVICE IN PERSIAN (1983) Khomeyni 24 April Speech Scores Iran’s Critics. Foreign Broadcast Information Service -SAS-83-080 on 25 April 1983.

Here, Khomeini refers to the *Iranian people* as opposed to Muslims as well as *Iran's* great ulema and *Iran's* great figures and scholars. In the excerpt below, Khomeini employs a similar terminology:

Those claiming to support human rights, the elaborate and high-sounding organizations set in the world - we do not see them condemning Iraq's acts. These organizations receive their cues from our enemies and then issue statements against Iran, the dear Iranian nation. They issue warnings to us. They substantiate their claims by stating that this is what our enemies have said. The so-called sound reasoning given by international organizations is: You are killing small children in the streets; you are daily executing hundreds of people in Evin Prison. As proof of this, they quote our enemies. [...] We hope that a situation is created by this Islamic center of Iran which will eliminate these corrupt values, propagate dear Islam, and bring about a situation in the world reviving the Islamic values which have been ignored. To do this we must first of all look at ourselves. There are people living in this country who are sediments which have remained behind. These people beat their chests in favour of the West or the East. Meanwhile, they claim to be an integral part of the nation. These people are aliens in the guise of *nationalists and Iranians*. They are aliens in Iran, and Iran no longer recognizes them as Iranian. The individual who sacrifices all his Islamic and national values for the USSR or for America is not considered an Iranian.³⁸⁵

³⁸⁵ ~~TEHRAN DOMESTIC SERVICE~~ IN PERSIAN (1983) Khomeini 28 May Speech on Bahais. Foreign Broadcast Information Service [SAS083-105].

Similarly to above, Khomeini refers to *the dear Iranian nation* just as he refers to those enemies living within Iran as *no longer* [recognized] *as Iranians*, the latter quote being a far cry from labeling enemies as *kuffar* (infidels) as he did with Saddam and Iraqi soldiers in the excerpts that we saw above. Moreover, in this speech, the people who sacrifice, not just their *Islamic* values but also their *national* ones, seize to be *Iranian*, to Khomeini. Again, this discourse is markedly different from that which we have previously seen, whereby such people might reasonably be thought to have been called out as apostates for going against Islam. Khomeini also invokes the modern concept *international organizations* and implicitly also the international world order through his reference to *elaborate and high-sounding organizations* [not] *condemning Iraq*.

Khomeini's shift in discourse should be understood as a significant one, especially given his efforts during the Islamic revolution, in which he, as Halliday (2003) notes, decidedly invoked Arabic - the language of the Qu'ran - writings and slogans, in order to distinguish himself from nationalist revolutionary forces.³⁸⁶ In a similar vein, Falk (2014), in his reflections on his interview with Khomeini shortly before the latter's return to Iran from exile, noted the following:

We asked about his hopes for the "Iranian Revolution". His response fascinates me to this day. First of all, he immediately corrected us forcefully pointing out that what had just been completed was "an Islamic Revolution", that is, asserting as primary an identity associated _____ with religious and cultural affinities rather than emphasizing the nationalist agenda of regime change that was the common way of

³⁸⁶ Halliday, F. (2003) *Islam and the myth of Confrontation: Religion and Politics in the Middle East*. London; New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd. p. 62.

interpreting what had happened in Iran. Khomeini went on to say that the importance of the unfolding of events in Iran related to the entire region.³⁸⁷

By July 1988, Iran's severely weakened military as well as the country's worsening socio-economic conditions were such that Khomeini saw himself forced to accept United Nations resolution 598, which called for an immediate ceasefire between Iran and Iraq as well the withdrawal of both sides to internationally recognized borders. Khomeini was made aware of Iran's strategic disadvantages in the war by the Revolutionary Guards and military commanders who informed the Ayatollah that, given Iran's inferiority in chemical and regular weaponry, "the Islamic military [would] not be victorious for some time."³⁸⁸ In addition, Khomeini had been informed by Prime Minister, Mir-Hossein Mousavi, on behalf of the latter's Minister of Economy, that "the financial situation of the country stood at below zero."

In a statement to the Iranian people, Khomeini categorically stated that such material and strategic disadvantages left him no choice but to accept UN resolution 598, as is made clear in the following passage:

You dear ones, more than anyone else, know that this decision is like drinking the poisoned chalice and I submit to the Almighty's will and for the safeguarding of Islam and the protection of the Islamic republic, I do away with my honour.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁷ AL JAZEERA (2014) *Ayatollah Khomeini: A rare encounter with a true revolutionary*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/02/ayatollah-khomeini-rare-encounte-20142354756879470.html> [Accessed: 3 February 2014].

³⁸⁸ COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS (n.d.) Letter from Ayatollah Khomeini regarding weapons during the Iran-Iraq war. [Online] Available from: <http://www.cfr.org/iran/letter-ayatollah-khomeini-regarding-weapons-during-iran-iraq-war/p11745> [Accessed: 1 February 2014]

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

By framing his decision as one that is made in line with *the Almighty's will* and in order to [safeguard] *Islam* [and protect] *the Islamic Republic*, Khomeini legitimizes the ceasefire is a choice made because of Islam, not despite of it. Perhaps partly because he is aware that this decision stands in clear contrast to his hitherto insistence to continue the war with Iraq, Khomeini emphasizes, through his likening of the ceasefire to *drinking the poisoned chalice*, the difficulty involved in reaching this decision. Had such difficulty gone unmentioned, it would have been problematic, one must assume, for Khomeini to retrospectively justify his policy of the preceding six years to remain at war with Iraq. However, so as to not suggest that Islam served only to inform his termination of the war, Khomeini incorporates the following passage in his statement, indicating that Islam served as his guiding principle when deciding to continue fighting *as well as* ending the war:

O' God! We rose for the sake of your religion, we fought for your religion
and we accept the cease-fire for the protection of your religion.³⁹⁰

What is more, Khomeini further legitimizes both such choices (as well as the choice to mount a revolution in 1979) by drawing on key figures in Shi'a history who, in their respective contexts, faced difficulties:

O' God! In the entire history, whenever prophets, guardians and ulema
decided to be the peacemakers of societies and intertwine practice with
knowledge, and organize societies devoid of corruption and decay, they

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

faced resistance from the Abu Jahls and the Abu Sofyans [opponents of Prophet Muhammad] of their time.³⁹¹

In doing so, Khomeini likens his own situation of having to make the hard choice of accepting a UN-brokered ceasefire, to situations in which prophets and guardians of the Shi'a tradition faced difficulties in the form of resistance from the opponents of Prophet Muhammad. One must assume that such sources of legitimization were drawn upon in order to garner domestic public and political support for his acceptance of Resolution 598. By no means does that discount the possibility that the decision was grounded in Khomeini's religious beliefs, which - as above - the concept of *maslahat* helps to explain.

Having rationalized his policy with reference to Islamic interests, justified and legitimized it further through references to Shi'a history, Khomeini finalized his statement with a call for the Iranian people to exert wariness against the hard-liners' message:

I said that a session should be convened and the people ought to be informed about the cease-fire. You must be careful because some hard-liners with their revolutionary slogans might divert your attention from what is best for Islam. I openly say that all your efforts should be directed at justifying this [the cease-fire]. Diversionary actions are *haram* and
_____ would lead to reactions. You are aware that, the high ranking officials of
_____ the system have taken this decision with extreme sadness and with their

³⁹¹ Ibid.

heart filled to the brim with love for Islam and our Islamic country. Be aware of God and whatever happens, it is His decision.³⁹²

Khomeini's discursive examples shown throughout this section highlight the Ayatollah's readiness to alternate between distinct rationales in his justification of the Iran-Iraq war's continuation post-1982 and its ending in 1988. The perhaps most telling example of this tendency as it applies to action, as opposed to discourse, is what has become known as the "Iran-Contra Affair." That is, a clandestine arms deal between Iran and the U.S., in the period August 1985 to March 1987, through which the U.S. sold arms to Iran, and channelled them through Israel, in exchange for the release of American hostages held by pro-Iranian Hizbollah in Lebanon.³⁹³ Although Khomeini and his cohort denied that the deal took place, various declassified documents convincingly suggest otherwise.³⁹⁴ Iran's motive for accepting the arms deal is all but clear, given the dire state of its arms arsenal at the time. As Mark Phythian relates,

[...] that the Iranian air force could function at all [after Iraq's initial attack and] was able to undertake a number of sorties over Baghdad strike at strategic installations [was] at least partly due to the decision of the Reagan administration to allow Israel to channel arms of US origin to Iran to prevent an easy and early Iraqi

victory.³⁹⁵

³⁹² Ibid.

³⁹³ Ramazani, R.K. (2004) Ideology and Pragmatism in Iran's Foreign Policy *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 58 (4), Autumn, pp. 556.

³⁹⁴ NEW YORK TIMES (1994) Excerpts from the Iran-Contra Report: A Secret Foreign Policy' Accessed: May 5, 2013. Available from <http://www.nytimes.com/books/97/06/29/reviews/iran-transcript.html> [Accessed: 13 March, 2014].

³⁹⁵ Phythian, M. (1997). *Arming Iraq: How the U.S. and Britain Secretly Built Saddam's War Machine*, Boston: Northeastern University Press. p. 20.

Reluctant though Khomeini surely was to engage with the two “Satans” - that is, U.S. and Israel - in this (and presumably any) context, his ultimate willingness to do so stands in sharp contrast to his general anti-Western stance as well as specific statements such as “[Iran does] *not collude even for a moment with America, the Soviet Union and other global powers, and [considers] collusion with superpowers and other powers as turning [its] back on Islamic principles.*”³⁹⁶ The Iran-contra affair thus highlights the extent to which Khomeini was willing to go to preserve the Islamic Republic, and by extension also just how much the malleability of Shi’a thought, as it is made possible by the *Faqih*’s right to interpretation of doctrine along with concepts like *maslahat*, can account for the most distinct, if contradictory, rationales and actions.

5.4 The Salman Rushdie Affair

On 14 February 1989, Khomeini issued a religious ruling, a *fatwa*, against the British- and Muslim-born, but non-believing, novelist Salman Rushdie in response to the latter’s book *The Satanic Verses* (1988); a publication interpreted by many Muslim communities worldwide to contain elements that are blasphemous against Islam. Khomeini’s *fatwa* declared the following:

In the name of Him, the Highest. There is only one God, to whom we shall all return. I inform all zealous Muslims of the world that the author of the book entitled *The Satanic Verses* - which has been compiled, printed, and published in opposition to Islam, the Prophet, and the Qur’an - and all those involved in its publication who were aware of its content, are sentenced to death. I call on all zealous Muslims to execute

³⁹⁶ COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS (n.d.) Letter from Ayatollah Khomeini regarding weapons during the Iran-Iraq war. [Online] Available from: <http://www.cfr.org/iran/letter-ayatollah-khomeini-regarding-weapons-during-iran-iraq-war/p11745> [Accessed: 1 February 2014.

them quickly, wherever they may be found, so that no one else will dare to insult the Muslim sanctities. God willing, whoever is killed on this path is a martyr. In addition, anyone who has access to the author of this book, but does not possess the power to execute him, should report him to the people so that he may be punished for his actions. May peace and the mercy of God and His blessings be with you.³⁹⁷

The *fatwa* was preceded by and further instigated a furore of violent, at times deadly, demonstrations in the Muslim world and beyond. It directly caused diplomatic relations between the United Kingdom (UK) and various other European countries to break; a political crisis that, in the case of the UK, would last until at least 1998 when diplomatic relations between the two countries were restored as a result of Iran's then Foreign Minister, Kamal Kharrazi's, public effort to divorce his government from Khomeini's *fatwa*.³⁹⁸ Restored diplomatic relations notwithstanding, the *fatwa* still renders British-Iranian relations strained more than two decades after its issuing.³⁹⁹ Amongst the Iranian public, too, the *fatwa* instigated condemnation and massive protests, including a 3000 people strong demonstration assembled by the British embassy in Tehran, in which demonstrators accused the the UK of being "the enemy of the *Qur'an* and Islam, and the manifestation of all things evil."⁴⁰⁰ In another incident, the head of an Iranian charity organization, 15th Khordad Relief Agency, offered a significant financial award to anyone, Iranian or non-Iranian, for the murder of Rushdie; a reward that remains standing today and that, in fact, was increased as recently as September 2012, when the head of 15th Khordad Relief Agency increased the financial award to \$3.3 million, in the

³⁹⁷ Pipes, D. (2003) *The Rushdie Affair: the novel, the Ayatollah and the West*, 2nd Edition, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers. p. 27.

³⁹⁸ NEW YORK TIMES (1998) *Iran Drops Rushdie Death Threat, And Britain Renews Teheran Ties*, [Online] 25th September. Available from: <https://www.nytimes.com/books/99/04/18/specials/rushdie-drops.html> [Accessed: 25 April, 2014].

³⁹⁹ This continued relevance of Khomeini's *fatwa* in part has to do with the fact that, following Kharrazi's effort to restore relations with the U.K, a bounty *continued* to be offered by the Iranian state-funded charity organisation 15th Khordad Relief Agency for Rushdie's murder.

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid.* p. 29.

context of the release of the allegedly Islamophobic film *Innocence of Muslims* (2012),⁴⁰¹ which he argued would not have occurred, had Khomeini's fatwa been carried out.⁴⁰²

Scholars like Pipes (2003) and Piscatori (1990) have speculated about the “religious legitimacy” of Khomeini's *fatwa*, given its timing and context. As Pipes (2003) observes, Khomeini responded, in the form of his *fatwa*, to Rushdie's book on February 14, 1989 – five months after the book's initial publication in September 1988 and three months after its review in Iranian press, which leads him to question the chanciness behind the *fatwa*: if it was indeed theologically based, why did Khomeini not issue it earlier?⁴⁰³ Piscatori (1990) moreover points out that many works published prior to *The Satanic Verses* have included material that could be deemed blasphemous against Islam, yet they have not been subjected - by Khomeini nor other high ranking clerics - to scrutiny anywhere near the same level as Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*. Piscatori's examples include H.G. Well's *A Short History of the World* (1922), in which the Prophet Muhammad “with his shifty character” and “unedifying life” was depicted as a man of considerable vanity, greed, cunning, self-deception and quite insincere religious passion.⁴⁰⁴ To be sure, the publication of Well's book prompted protest rallies internationally just as governments throughout Europe were petitioned to ban it. But even so, no *fatwa* was issued from Islamic religious authorities anywhere. A key difference between Well and Rushdie is that the latter, being a Muslim by birth and a non-believing Muslim by choice, was, in addition to being blasphemous against Islam, also an apostate.⁴⁰⁵ Apostacy may not have been applicable to

⁴⁰¹ *Innocence of Muslims* is a 13-minute low-budget YouTube movie produced by Egyptian-American, and reportedly Coptic Christian, Nakoula Basseley Nakoula, which depicts Christians being attacked and a medical clinic being trashed by a Muslim mob in Egypt while the police stand by; as well as a retelling of the life of the Prophet Mohammad in a crudely Islamophobic language. The movie caused outrage and demonstrations across the Muslim world and has been characterised by international media as being a deliberately anti-Muslim film. Peter Bradshaw (17 September 2012) *Innocence of Muslims: a dark demonstration of the power of film*, The Guardian. Accessed: November 13, 2012. Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/filmblog/2012/sep/17/innocence-of-muslims-demonstration-film>]

⁴⁰² THE GUARDIAN (2012) *Salman Rushdie bounty increased amid anti-Islam film controversy*. 13th November. Accessed: 10 December, 2013. Available from: <http://www.theguardian.com/books/iran-blog/2012/sep/17/salman-rushdie-bounty-increased-film>.

⁴⁰³ Pipes, D. (2003) *The Rushdie Affair: The Novel, the Ayatollah and the West*. p. 45.

⁴⁰⁴ Piscatori, J. (1990) The Rushdie Affair and the Politics of Ambiguity. *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs)*. 66 (4). p. 767.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.

Well, but, as Pipes (2003) notes, there are numerous of Khomeini's contemporaries that it could well apply to, including Iranians who celebrate *Nawruz* (Iranian New year), Muslims who actively chose to live in Western countries ungoverned by *Sharia*, fundamentalists who disdain the professional men of religion, and Muslim rulers who do not apply the *Sharia* in their countries.⁴⁰⁶ An obvious example would be Egyptian President, Anwar Al Sadat, who, despite employing increased Islamic discourse during the 1970s, governed Egypt according to a secular judicial system and, markedly, signed a Peace Treat with Israel, the "arch-enemy of Islam" according to Khomeini.⁴⁰⁷ Nevertheless, neither Sadat nor any of the aforementioned 'apostates' were sentenced to death through a *fatwa* or other means.

Piscatori and Pipes are right in their observations but, I argue, wrong about questioning the "theological validity" of Khomeini's *fatwa*. I base this argument on both the tangible effects of the *fatwa*, - containing domestic discontent and spreading the Islamic Revolution; both in line with Khomeini's foreign policy doctrine - as well as the concept of *maslahat*, which holds that essentially any act is permissible if in the interest of the Islamic state. With regards to the *fatwa*'s first tangible effect - containing, or even distracting from, the domestic discontent that was prevalent in Iran following the Iran-Iraq war. As noted previously, the Iran-Iraq war had initially strengthened Khomeini's nascent Islamic Government by granting Iranians an issue to rally around; but its termination in the fall of 1988 left Iran economically devastated, internationally alienated, and with a society that had lost confidence in the leadership and its ability to govern (political leadership, around this time, publicly disagreed on issues ranging from socioeconomic policy to foreign policy orientation.)⁴⁰⁸ Issuing a *fatwa*, in February 1989, would have the effect of galvanizing Iranians around an ideological issue and thus distracting from their discontent. It

⁴⁰⁶ Pipes, D. (2003) *The Rushdie Affair: The Novel, the Ayatollah and the West*. p. 33-4.

⁴⁰⁷ See i.e. Taheri (1985) who details Khomeini's adversary to Israel and his lack of inhibition about 'branding the Jews as responsible for almost all the ills of this world and calling on Muslims to prepare for holy war [...] against the Jewish state' Taheri, A. (1985) *The Spirit of Allah: Khomeini and the Islamic Revolution*. London: Hutchinson & Co. (Publishers) Ltd.. p.304.

⁴⁰⁸ Kaussler, B. (2011) British-Iranian Relations, The Satanic Verses and the Fatwa: A Case of Two-Level Game Diplomacy. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. 38 (2). p.206.

is not difficult to grasp why Khomeini anticipated the effect of his *fatwa* to materialize as in the large-scale protests that it did. With practical experience from the Islamic Revolution ten years prior, Khomeini knew – better than anyone, probably - of the real possibility of uniting Iranians under a common theme (anti-Westernism) by means of a familiar discourse (Islamic). One could even argue that Khomeini in fact replicated, insofar as it was possible, the narrative present during the Islamic Revolution by which the apostasy of a Western-influenced figure infringed on the purity and traditions of Islam. In 1979 this figure was personified by the Shah; in 1989 by Salman Rushdie. Similarly, and as alerted to in the previous section, Khomeini would depict Islam's (or Iran's, depending on the context) adversary, Saddam Hussein, as *Saddam-i kafir*; (or Saddam, the unbeliever) in attempts to emphasize that which was unrighteous about the enemy and, by extension also the sanctity of Iran's war against Iraq war.⁴⁰⁹ So, negative portrayal of an enemy by way of emphasizing its atheism had been commonplace in Iran to intensify opposition to the Shah and Saddam Hussein, and it seems cogent, therefore, for Khomeini to have foreseen that a *fatwa*, which invoked a similar kind of sentiment, would galvanize the public to a point where they would be distracted from domestic grievances.

With regards to the second effect of Khomeini's *fatwa*; spreading the Islamic Revolution. This refers specifically to the part of the *fatwa* which calls for “all zealous Muslims” to execute Salman Rushdie and others involved in the publication of his book, which highlights Khomeini's intent to reach Muslim audiences beyond Iran. This is made further clear in the reiteration of Khomeini's *fatwa*, released a few days after the original one, which stated that “it is incumbent on every Muslim to employ everything he has got in his life and his wealth to send [Salman Rushdie] to hell.”⁴¹⁰ To be sure, international condemnation and protests also

⁴⁰⁹ Gieling, S.(1999) *Religion and War in Revolutionary Iran*. p. 7.

⁴¹⁰ NEW YORK TIMES (1989) Khomeini Spurns Rushdie Regrets and Reiterates Threat of Death. [Online] Available from: <http://www.nytimes.com/1989/02/20/world/khomeini-spurns-rushdie-regrets-and-reiterates-threat-of-death.html>. [Accessed: 14 March, 2014].

preceded the *fatwa*; they commenced in India even before the book's publication on September 26, 1988, where Muslims learned about *The Satanic Verses* from two magazines that provided reviews of the book and excerpts from it, leading members of the Indian parliament to successfully campaign for the book's banning. Action spread to the UK following a letter from Aslam Ejaz of the Islamic Foundation in Madras to Faiyazuddin Ahmad of the Islamic Foundation in Leicester, in which the latter was encouraged to "do God's work in Great Britain."⁴¹¹ He did so by photocopying the offending passages from the book and proliferating them to U.K.-based Islamic organizations and Embassies of Muslim states, which instigated calls to have the book banned and its author prosecuted on the charge of blasphemy and, eventually, also book-burnings and protests. Serious death threats emerged in the US against employees of Viking Penguin publishing house in New York (who had yet to publish the book). Similarly, the Muslim community in South Africa protested against the book prior to its publication, and issued death threats against Rushdie. The most severe riots broke out in Islamabad, Pakistan on February 12, 1989 in which 10,000 protesters marched towards the American Cultural Centre and set fire to that building (ironically, given Rushdie's UK citizenship, British property was not assaulted; the demonstrations were presumably more connected to the forthcoming U.S. publication of *The Satanic Verses*.) In short, public Muslim mobilisation around this issue cannot be entirely attributed to Khomeini's *fatwa*. The latter point only strengthens the argument, however, that Khomeini sought to signal his power, as it can reasonably be assumed that Khomeini might have foreseen the intensification of his *fatwa's* international ramifications. Judging by one British Muslim comment, such intensification worked: "many Muslims didn't agree with the fatwa [but] if you disagreed with the fatwa it was as if you disagreed with the Prophet himself and your faith would be lacking."⁴¹²

⁴¹¹ Pipes, Daniel (2003) *The Rushdie Affair: the novel, the Ayatollah and the West*. p. 20.

⁴¹² British Broadcasting Corporation. 2009. *The Satanic Verses Affair* [Online] [Accessed: 5 January, 2013] Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89ADjzZVKXw>. 0:40-00:41 mins.

5.5 Conclusion

From the material presented throughout this chapter, we can, as in the previous one, discern two primary roles of religion. Firstly, Khomeini's religious beliefs - comprised by the interplay between the Ayatollah's individual faith and the Twelver Shi'a interpretive strand of Islam - profoundly shaped his worldview, which was characterized by his adherence to *Velayat-e Faqih* (specific to Shi'ism) and a fierce anti-Westernism. Khomeini's worldview reflected in his foreign policy doctrine, which focused on consolidating the Islamic Republic through non-alignment and fierce anti-Westernism, and spreading the Islamic Revolution beyond Iran's borders. This doctrine moreover reflected in two of Khomeini's important foreign policies, namely his insistence to continue the Iran-Iraq war past Iran's nominal victory in 1982, as well as in his *fatwa* that death sentenced the British novelist Salman Rushdie; both of these foreign policies can reasonably be thought of as reflecting Khomeini's intention to consolidate the Islamic Republic and spread the Islamic Revolution.

A second role of religion in the context of Khomeini's foreign policy, is one of legitimization. Khomeini consistently employed religious discourse to legitimize his foreign policies; something that reflects both his own religious beliefs as well as those of his constituents. To anyone who is vaguely familiar with Khomeini's rhetoric, his adoption of religious discourse is hardly surprising and to scholars like Gieling (1999), Pipes (2003) and Piscatori (1990), the contradictory elements of such discourse are not either, as they are assumed to reflect a materialist pursuit of power to which religious legitimization is an important instrumental tool. I oppose the latter view, and argue instead that any such contradiction can be explained with reference to Shi'a Islamic concepts like *ijtihad* and *maslahat* that were surely well-known to Khomeini. When paired with the

Ayatollah's unswerving faith it is all but plausible that Khomeini's discursive and practical inconsistencies in the context of his foreign policy do not indicate a departure from his religious beliefs, but rather a development, and reinforcement, thereof.

CHAPTER 6

RELIGION AND FOREIGN POLICY IN SAUDI ARABIA UNDER FAHD BIN ABDULAZIZ AL SAUD (1975-1992)

Fellow citizens: If God intends good to come to a people, He will guide them to what is most appropriate. God has favored us greatly, beyond measure, and the greatest favor of all is Islam. If we fully adhere to this religion, we shall never go astray.

- King Fahd's on the issuance of the Basic Law of Governance, 1 March 1992.⁴¹³

6.0 Introduction

These opening words might reasonably be taken as an extension of Ayatollah Khomeini's discourse from the previous chapter, but they belong to someone who, in many ways, was quite his opposite. Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the fifth King of Saudi Arabia, was known to his Western observers as the monarch who brought modernization to the Desert Kingdom, enjoyed a special relationship with his US counterparts and, in a more private vein, was a regular on the exclusive party scene in Marbella, Spain; hardly a characterization fit for Khomeini. And yet, Fahd employed much of the same religiously-infused discourse as Khomeini, and was even seen by his domestic admirers - albeit mostly relatives that led similar lives to him - as a man of faith who, like his own words above suggest to be the case, was guided by Islam and wanted the same for his people and Kingdom. I would be careful to depict Fahd in these terms, but his persona, worldview and indeed his foreign policy can by no means be understood outside the context of religion. This is not just

⁴¹³ ROYAL EMBASSY OF SAUDI ARABIA, D.C. (n.d.) King Fahd's Speech on the issuance of the Basic Law of Governance [Online] Available from: http://www.saudiembassy.net/about/country-information/laws/King_Fahd_Speech.aspx [Accessed: 15 January, 2015].

because religion features extensively in Fahd's foreign policy discourse - as Gause III quite rightly observes in his discussion about the Kingdom's foreign policy in general: "if the rhetoric of Saudi leaders is taken at face value, we would have to conclude that Islam defines the role of Saudi Arabia in the world."⁴¹⁴ Rather, it is because religion, for historical reasons with the utmost modern-day relevance, is decisive to how Fahd saw himself, and indeed how others saw him. Religion in the form of a belief-community refers, in the case of Fahd and Saudi Arabia, to Wahhabism; a branch of Sunni Islam that applies a staunchly conservative interpretation of *Sharia* aimed at emulating the seventh century community in which the Prophet Muhammad lived, on the very same lands that Fahd, as King, was the Custodian of. As this chapter will discuss, its followers consider Wahhabism the only true emulation of the Prophet's intended Islamic community and by extension consider other interpretations of Islam - especially Shi'ism but also other Sunni branches, not to mention the non-Islamic Abrahamic religions - as *bida* (innovations). Given the birthplace of Muhammad on the Arabian Peninsula, Wahhabi Muslims appropriate onto themselves the belief that they are "purest" followers of Islam and that the onus is naturally on them to assume leadership in the Muslim world at large.

In this chapter, I argue that the Wahhabi "belief-community" to which Fahd belonged comprised an important part of his worldview, though less as a result of his individual "faith," than of the historic religio-political agreement forged between eighteenth century leaders of the Al Saud dynasty and Wahhab tribe, which Fahd, as a leading royal figure, necessarily had an interest in living by; if not for reasons related to his own "faith," then for the sake of the Al Saud regime's security which was facilitated as a result of the religious legitimacy granted to it, by its relationship with the Wahhab tribe. This aspect of Fahd's world-view interplayed with another important component which, for Fahd as a Royalist, demanded equal interest, namely a strong alliance with the US, whose expertise

⁴¹⁴ Gause III, G. F. (2002) *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia*. In: Hinnebusch, R. and Ehteshami, A. (eds.) *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc. p. 202.

and support in defense and military matters, the Kingdom depended for its material security. Fahd's worldview translated, roughly, into a foreign policy doctrine that aimed to maintain a strong US-Saudi Arabian alliance, on the one hand; and a leadership role in inter-Arab affairs, particularly in matters with a Islamic dimension, on the other. The chapter looks at two of Fahd's major foreign policies. Firstly, Fahd's foreign policy vis-a-vis the Camp David Accords, and the Palestinian issue more generally. In this context, religion assumed a constraining role in that Fahd, due to the religious identity vested in him as leader of *Islamic* Saudi Arabia, by virtue of the religio-politico symbiosis, which prevented him from following through on his preferred moderate policy vis-a-vis the Accords. Secondly, Fahd's foreign policy vis-a-vis Operation Desert Shield and the subsequent Gulf War. In this context, the chapter shows that Fahd invoked religion in his public discourse as well as an official *fatwa* granted to him by the Kingdom's *Ulema*, in order to legitimize his invitation of foreign soldiers onto Saudi soil; an act that otherwise delegitimized him, again, by virtue of the religio-politico symbiosis.

6.1 Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud's worldview

A far cry from their characterizations of Ayatollah Khomeini, Western observers have by and large associated Saudi Arabia's fifth King, Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, with close ties to Western powers, above all, the US; and with a lavish life-style. Though toning down his reputation as a "womanizer, drinker and gambler" following his ascension to the throne in 1982, his memory remains one of an opulent leader whose "largesse [was] the stuff of legend."⁴¹⁵ A good example of the latter is Fahd's commissioning of a White House replica in Saudi Arabia - one reportedly extravagant even for Gulf standards, despite it rarely, if ever, being used by him⁴¹⁶- which captures

⁴¹⁵ Sicherman, H. (2011) King Fahd's Saudi Arabia. *Orbis*. 55 (3). p. 481-88.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid. See also Lacey, R. (2010) *Inside the Kingdom: Kings, Clerics, Modernists, Terrorists and the Struggle for Saudi Arabia*. London: Arrow Books. p. 83-105.

both his affinity for the US, as well as his largesse. Through Fahd's efforts, not just as King (1982-2005),⁴¹⁷ but also as Education Minister (1953-62), Interior Minister (1962-67) and Deputy Prime Minister (1967-75) and Crown Prince (1975-82), Saudi Arabia underwent significant modernization, especially, in the Kingdom's education, technology and infrastructure sectors. It was Fahd who introduced modern universities to Saudi Arabia and, under his watch, the number of higher education institutions grew from one, with an enrollment of twenty-one students, in 1957, to seven with roughly 64,000 students, in 1982.⁴¹⁸ Equally, he continued King Faisal's plan to modernize the technology sector, just as he encouraged prolific construction of hospitals, schools, roads and other "modern" services.⁴¹⁹ In part for these reasons, he has been described as more Western and less traditional in outlook than his successor Abdullah;⁴²⁰ a result, perhaps, of his many international travels from a very young age.

While Fahd is not, in Western media and scholarship, typically associated with having deep religious faith, probably because of his seemingly impious lifestyle, his family has a markedly different understanding of him. To one family member, Fahd "was a believer [who] knew that God is the Lord and we are merely His servants."⁴²¹ Another family member observed that,

The Book of God and the Prophet's Sunna were [Fahd's] utmost concern.

Even in his private majlises he would always say "this state was founded on the Qu'ran and the Sunna and true monotheistic doctrine. He was also in

⁴¹⁷ Though nominally King until his death in 2005, Crown Prince Abdullah acted as *de-facto* King, following Fahd's debilitating stroke in 1995.

⁴¹⁸ Saleh, M. A. (1986) Development of Higher Education in Saudi Arabia. *Higher Education*. 15 (1/2). p. 17.

⁴¹⁹ Bronson, R. (2005) Understanding US-Saudi Relations. In: In: Aarts, P. and Nonneman, G. (eds.) *Saudi Arabia in the Balance: Political Economy, Society, Foreign Affairs*. London: Hurst & Company Publishers Ltd. p. 381.

⁴²⁰ Altoriafi, A. (2012) Understanding the Role of State Identity in Foreign Policy Decision-Making: The Rise and Demise of Saudi-Iranian Rapprochement (1997-2009). PhD Thesis, London School of Economics. p. 195.

⁴²¹ (n.n.) (2015) King Fahd, the Spirit of Leadership.[Online]. Accessed: 15 June, 2015. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uoEujWy3hu4>. 19:30-36.

constant touch with the *Ulema*. Issues would arise and he'd immediately pick up the phone and call Sheikh ibn Baz or Sheikh ibn al-Uthaymeen or other sheikhs and ask them questions.⁴²²

Yet another family member describes Fahd as “assiduous in his religion”⁴²³ and as “patient, [seeking] council and [asking] God for council.”⁴²⁴ His biographer, Kamal Al Kilani, similarly describes Fahd as “a Muslim of deep faith and experience.”⁴²⁵ In his speech and action, Fahd is perceived to have been “always [keeping] the remembrance of God [on] his lips and [beginning] every deed he undertook [by] mentioning the name of our Lord.”⁴²⁶ Indeed, when Fahd changed his official title to *Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques* shortly after his ascension to the throne in 1982, he publicly stated that “It gives me great pleasure to announce my fervent and deeply felt desire to drop the title “His Majesty” and replace it with one closer to my heart [...]”⁴²⁷ Equally, in terms of action, Fahd expanded *Al Masjid al Haram* (the Grand Mosque) and *Al Masjid an-Nabawi* (the Prophet’s Mosque), the two most holy sites on the Arabian peninsula, just as he established the *King Fahd Complex For The Printing of the Holy Qu’ran*; a printing plant that, as its name indicates, was established to print the Islamic Holy book in Arabic as well as international languages for dissemination in Saudi Arabia and abroad. Fahd’s statement at the Complex’ inauguration in 1984 all but confirm the earlier impressions given by his family:

Two years ago I was in this place to lay the cornerstone for this great project
and in this city, which is the greatest of all cities: Madinah, whose people

⁴²² Ibid. 2:35-3:03. Sheikh ibn Baz or Sheikh ibn al-Uthaymeen were leading figures in Saudi Arabia’s religious establishment.

⁴²³ Ibid. 2:10-2:23.

⁴²⁴ Ibid. 14:36-14:43.

⁴²⁵ Kilani, Kamal Al. (1985) *Progress of a Nation: A Biography of King Fahd bin Abdul-Aziz*. p. 71.

⁴²⁶ Ibid. 22:12-20.

⁴²⁷ Ibid. 14:15-22.

were pleased with the advent of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and were his best helpers in the time of hardship. It is the city, from which the call for goodness and blessing started for the entire world. This day, we find the dream coming true with the best achievements. So, everyone in Saudi Arabia should thank Allah, may He be glorified, for this great blessing. I ask Allah to guide me to the service of my religion, my country and all Muslims, and from Allah I seek help.⁴²⁸

Fahd's ambition to create a powerful Saudi Arabia, and the modernization efforts in the education and technology sectors that he encouraged to grant the Kingdom such a status, were, in the eyes of his family, carried out "while respecting tradition,"⁴²⁹ with one family member stating about Fahd's education efforts (for both males and females) that, "this is not Westernization, this is advancement."⁴³⁰ Indeed, it was the official line across the ruling elite that "economic modernization can be reconciled with the traditional cultural, religious and political values of Saudi Arabia."⁴³¹ In his efforts, he was moreover perceived to hold the citizens' interest in high regard, a sentiment which he himself expressed upon his ascension to the throne, when he stated that "I will be a father to the young and a brother to the old. I am one of you. What pains you, pains me. What pleases you, pleases me."⁴³² Such a proclamation is in line with what is expected from a King in Saudi Arabia who, by religious tradition, rules according to the principle of *baya'a* (oath of allegiance to a leader), whereby the ruler is bound to the ruled according to *Sharia* (Islamic law).

⁴²⁸ KING FAHD COMPLEX FOR THE PRINTING OF THE HOLY QURAN (n.d.) *Establishment of the Complex and Its Inauguration*. [Online] Available from: <http://qurancomplex.gov.sa/Display.asp?section=7&l=eng&f=nobza01&trans=> [Accessed: February 10, 2015].

⁴²⁹ (n.n.) (2015) King Fahd, the Spirit of Leadership.[Online]. Accessed: 15 June, 2015. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uoEujWy3hu4>. 9:10-25.

⁴³⁰ Ibid. 7:00-7:03.

⁴³¹ Prokop, M. (2005) The War of Ideas: Education in Saudi Arabia. In: Aarts, P and Nonneman, G. (eds.) *Saudi Arabia in the Balance: Political Economy, Society, Foreign Affairs*. London: Hurst & Company Publishers Ltd. p. 62.

Through *baya'a*, the ruled are bound to give their loyalty to the ruler, except when *Sharia* is breached; the ruler, in turn, is bound to protect *Sharia* rulings and govern by them.⁴³² By some accounts, he took this role very seriously; as one family member states “He worked hard and even brought his work home. Suitcases full of documents. He would work on them until dawn. Then he would pray and catch some sleep. At 9 am, he’d be at the office.”⁴³³

Next to the characterizations above of Fahd as a lavish womanizer keen on maintaining strong US-Saudi relations, these family impressions of him as a pious man, reinforced through his own discourse, paint a picture of a man with two distinct, if highly contrasting, public personas. Though any personal reflections by Fahd of his religious beliefs are hard to come by, just as impressions of his piety given by people outside of a royal family that is notorious for strategically seeking to represent a united front, Fahd’s worldview, given how extensively it features in his public discourse and around his persona, cannot be understood without reference to religion. This religious dimension is, according to virtually all Western scholarship and commentary, a reflection of tradition rather than belief. Robert Lacey, an authority on the Kingdom and its ruling regime, notes that, according to a minister who worked with Fahd, members of the royal family are “without exception [brought] up to have respect and to show respect towards the religious scholars.”⁴³⁴ This respect, of Fahd and the royal family at large towards the religious establishment, must necessarily be understood in the context of the important position of the Kingdom’s *Ulema* in bestowing legitimacy upon the ruling King and the royal family at large.

⁴³² Altoriafi, A. (2012) Understanding the Role of State Identity in Foreign Policy Decision-Making: The Rise and Demise of Saudi-Iranian Rapprochement (1997-2009). PhD Thesis, London School of Economics. p. 195.

⁴³³ (n.n.) (2015) King Fahd, the Spirit of Leadership.[Online]. Accessed: 15 June, 2015. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uoEujWy3hu4>. 8:17-8:35.

⁴³⁴ Lacey, R. (2010) *Inside the Kingdom: Kings, Clerics, Modernists, Terrorists and the Struggle for Saudi Arabia*. London: Arrow Books. p. 87.

As discussed in chapter 3, the legitimacy of the Al Saud dynasty as rulers of modern day Saudi Arabia rests thoroughly on its long-standing alliance with the *Ulema*, which derives from a politico-religious symbiosis formed in 1744 between the dynasty's founding father, Muhammad Ibn al-Saud, and the founder of the Wahhabi movement, Muhammad Ibn Abd Al Wahhab.⁴³⁵ Through what was effectively a power-sharing agreement between the two, Ibn Abd Al Wahhab promised to grant Muhammad Ibn al-Saud the religious legitimacy necessary for his recognition as the effective ruler of the Saudi state, against both protection and a society led according to Islamic values.⁴³⁶ Were it not for this agreement, and for the religious legitimacy, that it provided, Al Saud would not have been able to unify his sources of support and gain an advantage over his neighbors who had those same sources of support, but no unifying call of religion. The founder of the modern Saudi state, Ibn Saud, faced a similar situation in 1932, when his attempted re-establishment of the Saudi state, depended on the success of a Wahhabi-Saud alliance. Specifically, Ibn Saud recognized the political implications of the expansionist agenda of the *Ikhwan* (Muslim Brothers), whose militant power he had relied heavily on in his territorial conquests of the Peninsula's regions. Aware of the necessity to remain friendly with British powers in neighboring territories and to draw the Saudi state's borders within the Arabian peninsula where great power desire for influence was largely non-existent, Ibn Saud needed the *Ulema*'s approval to crack down on the *Ikhwan*. Upon receiving this approval, Ibn Saud, with his religious legitimacy intact, could pursue his state building project. As such, Ibn Saud effectively implemented an approach to consolidating his rule similar to that of his forefather in 1744.⁴³⁷ Moreover, the *Ulema* did the same, but for different reasons. As scholars like

⁴³⁵ al-Rasheed, M. (2010) *A History of Saudi Arabia*, 2nd edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 16.

⁴³⁶ Ochsenwald, W. (1981) Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Revival, *Middle East Studies*. p. 273.

⁴³⁷ This analysis is based primarily on Nevo, J. (1998) Religion and National Identity in Saudi Arabia. *Middle Eastern Studies*. 34 (3). p. 37 and Kechichian, J. (1986) The Role of the Ulama in the Politics of an Islamic State: the case of Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 18 (1). 1986. p. 63-65.

known to have had a decisive influence on Ibn Al Wahhab and the Wahhabi doctrine. Although promoting a strict interpretation of the Qur'an and Sunnah, Taymiyyah supported the notion of *ijtihad* (the right to interpretation), arguing that state and religion should be inextricably linked as the latter can only be protected through the coercive power of the state; and the former would become tyrannical if not ruled by *Sharia*.⁴³⁸

The *Ulema's* exercise of *ijtihad* has been seen time and again in the Kingdom's modern history, particularly in cases where doing so has been at odds with the views of religious fundamentalists. Examples include the *Ulema's* official approval of the regime's use of force against religious extremists who violently demonstrated in the Grand Mosque of Mecca in 1979, to call for greater Islamization of the Kingdom's social, political and educational practices. Another example, which will be explored in detail later in this chapter, is the *Ulema's fatwa* (religious ruling) to legitimize the regime's hosting of Western troops in Saudi Arabia during the 1991 Gulf War, which caused vociferous opposition, not just from the Saudi religious extremists, but from Muslims and Muslim leaders worldwide. Importantly, while these examples demonstrate the *Ulema's* willingness to be pragmatic, which, given the Wahhabist tradition's adherence to Ibn Taymiyya's teachings, is a way by which the religious establishment maximize their own security so as to be able to exert influence, they are not to suggest that the regime in turn is unconstrained in its policy decision-making. By most accounts, the religious fundamentalists just described being one of few exceptions, the Wahhabi doctrine is fiercely conservative. It follows a literal observance of *Sharia* - cases of *ijtihad* notwithstanding - which, as far as international relations are concerned, considers the world divided into believers (those that follow Islam, in its Sunni and conservative variant) and infidels (those that do not follow Islam, or do so in a way that is deemed too liberal). Notably, Shi'a Muslims fall under the latter category, because they are seen in the Wahhabi doctrine as illegally

⁴³⁸ See Nevo, J. (1998) Religion and National Identity in Saudi Arabia. *Middle Eastern Studies*. 34 (3). p. 37 and Kechichian, J. (1986) The Role of the Ulama in the Politics of an Islamic State: the case of Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 18 (1). 1986. p. 63-65.

believing in *bida* (innovations); a reference to the Shi'a belief that the Prophet Muhammad's rightful successor should be of his bloodline and not, as the Sunni belief holds, of his community.⁴³⁹ Moreover, a sort of demonization of everything that is different from Wahhabism, including other Islamic schools of thought or religious practices, above all Western culture and religion. According to one Saudi woman reflecting on her religious education in the Kingdom, "the mind of each of us has been programmed since school age [...] that values and good deeds are ours only and that others lack them. They taught us that every non-Muslim is an enemy of ours, and that the West is equivalent to decadence."⁴⁴⁰

Relations with the West and incorporation of Western culture on the part of the Al Saud regime is thus far from straightforward. When introducing changes towards modernization in the kingdom, for example, and met with resistance from the *Ulema*, the ruling King has needed to persuade the *Ulema* of the benefits tied to the proposed change, rather than implementing that change against the will of the religious leadership.⁴⁴¹ In political matters, too, the *Ulema*'s approval has weighed heavily on the regime's decision-making, such as when its consent has been required to carry out a power-transfer in the decision-making elite, as was the case during King Saud's deposition in favour of King Faisal, in 1964.⁴⁴² Efforts to maintain a relationship with the *Ulema* have been essential to the regime's religious legitimacy on which, as we have seen, its right to rule has been tied historically and continues to be so.

Accordingly, as Nevo (1996) amongst others has argued, ruling members of the royal family, whether espousing religious beliefs or not, is necessarily interested in maximizing its religious

⁴³⁹ Nonneman, G. (eds.) *Saudi Arabia in the Balance: Political Economy, Society, Foreign Affairs*. London: Hurst & Company Publishers Ltd. p. 381.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 381.

⁴⁴¹ Kechichian, J. (1986) The Role of the Ulama in the Politics of an Islamic State: the case of Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 18 (1). 1986. p. 57.

⁴⁴² Ochsenwald, W. (1981) Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Revival. *Middle East Studies*. p. 274.

legitimacy. To Fahd, that interest seemed to derive from his knowledge of the *Ulema*'s popularity amongst the Saudi Arabian populace, as can be deduced from his confidential statement to one of his colleague: "if an election were held [in Saudi Arabia] tomorrow, Bin Baz⁴⁴³ would beat us without even leaving his house."⁴⁴⁴ Whatever the motivation of the royal family's ruling members may be to maximize their legitimacy, it employs wide-ranging means to do so, all of which relate to promoting a strict observance of Islam. Such means include adopting Islamic symbols, in a national context, such as a national flag that features the *Shahada* (the Islamic creed) which states that *There is no God but God, and Muhammad is his messenger*, against a green - the Prophet's color - background, and above a sword in representation of the House of Saud's military strength.⁴⁴⁵ Another example is the regime's adoption of the *Qu'ran* as the state's constitution, *Sharia* as the source of its legal system, and social regulations that prohibit non-Muslims from becoming Saudi citizens as well as the public promotion, if enforcement, of Islamic norms and practice.⁴⁴⁶ Above all, perhaps, are the regime's efforts to consolidate the national identity around Islam through public discourse. The Saud dynasty's relationship with the *Ulema*, and its historical roots, is referenced extensively by the former in public discourse, as the following excerpt from King Fahd speech of March 1993 exemplifies,

Muslims have been happy with the *Sharia* of Islam ever since it came to rule their affairs and daily lives. In modern history, the first Saudi State was founded on the basis of Islam more than two and a half centuries ago, when two pious reformers, Imam Mohammed Bin Saud and Sheikh Mohammed

⁴⁴³ Bin Baz refers to the Sheikh who, as noted previously, was a leading figure in Saudi Arabia's religious establishment along with Sheikh ibn al-Uthaymee.

⁴⁴⁴ Lacey, R. (2010) *Inside the Kingdom: Inside the Kingdom: Kings, Clerics, Modernists, Terrorists and the Struggle for Saudi Arabia*. London: Arrow Books. p. 85. Lacey, R. (2010) *Inside the Kingdom: Inside the Kingdom: Kings, Clerics, Modernists, Terrorists and the Struggle for Saudi Arabia*. London: Arrow Books. p. 85.

⁴⁴⁵ Salamé, G. (1987) Islam and Politics in Saudi Arabia. *Arab Studies Quarterly* 9 (3). p. 306.

⁴⁴⁶ Nevo, J. (1998) Religion and National Identity in Saudi Arabia, *Middle Eastern Studies*. 34 (3). p. 37.

Bin Abdul-Wahhab (may God have mercy on their souls!) committed themselves to it [...] This State was set upon a clear course of politics and government. It was committed to propagating Islam and to fostering a sense of community. This is the course of Islam, the Creed and the *sharia*. Ever since the establishment of this righteous state, the people of the country have enjoyed happiness, security and unity of opinion.⁴⁴⁷

By emphasizing the Saud-*Ulema* relationship and its historical origins, and furthermore associating the governing system that it provides with happiness, security and unity of the governed, Fahd not only legitimizes the Saudi state in this passage, but also reinforces a national identity around an *Islamic* Saudi state. Fahd expresses this more concisely - and explicitly - in the final part of the speech, stating that *the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is an Arab Islamic State*. With this discourse, he promotes a markedly different type of nationalism than that seen elsewhere in the region where nationalism has largely been attached to a secular and modernized notion of the state,⁴⁴⁸ though exceptions exist, as we saw in the previous chapter when, though only sporadically, Khomeini intertwined notion of Islamism and Iranian nationalism. With reference to Fahd's speech above, Al-Rasheed (1996) points out that the political rhetoric of Fahd, and that of the House of Saud in general, has consistently forged a triangular relationship between God, as the source establishing and governing the political process; the King, as he who enacts his holy mission by guarding God's sacred laws; and finally, the Saudi nation which is required to be loyal to God and the King.⁴⁴⁹ In this way, Saudi nationalism is intrinsically tied not only to Islam, but also to the ruling Al Saud

⁴⁴⁷ ROYAL EMBASSY OF SAUDI ARABIA, WASHINGTON D.C. (n.d.) King Fahd's Speech on the issuance of the basic Law of Governance. [Online] Available from: https://www.saudiembassy.net/about/country-information/laws/King_Fahd_Speech.aspx. [Accessed: 1 February, 2015].

⁴⁴⁸ Nevo, J. (1998) Religion and National Identity in Saudi Arabia. *Middle Eastern Studies*. 34 (3). p. 35.

⁴⁴⁹ al-Rasheed, M. (1996) God, the King and the Nation: Saudi Arabia in the 1990s. *Middle East Journal*. 50 (3). p. 360, 365.

family. The latter's role in leading the Saudi Arabian state, Al-Rasheed further argues, is emphasized in Fahd's speech of 2 March, 1992, when he stated the following:

We remained faithful to Islam, belief and *Sharia* during the reign of King Abdul Aziz, who built and unified Saudi Arabia on the basis of this program, although he faced difficult historical conditions. In spite of these difficulties, he insisted on applying the Islamic program in government and society.⁴⁵⁰

By focusing on Ibn Saud's role, as opposed to that of both Ibn Saud and the *Ulema*, in implementing *Sharia* governance, Fahd implies that Ibn Saud is the primary founder of the third Saudi state and thus not only legitimizes the dynasty's right to govern, but also intensifies the connection between it and Islam.⁴⁵¹

Alongside carving out a role for Fahd, and any Saudi Arabian King, as ruler of a conservative, *Sharia*-led Islamic state, that he must necessarily appropriate, history has also carved out a role for the King to maintain strong economic and, especially, defence relations with the US. Specifically, this role stems from the discovery of oil reserves in Saudi Arabia in the mid-1930s, and the collaboration with U.S. oil companies to extract and put it to market, which led to significant economic growth in the Kingdom. Revenue from oil-sales were crucial for Ibn Saud to consolidate his state-building project in that it enabled him to, amongst other things, provide benefits in the form of shelter, for example, to its citizens, in addition to his promises of ruling over the latter by *Sharia*.⁴⁵² More importantly, the U.S.-Saudi Arabian alliance comprised a defence-agreement, albeit

⁴⁵⁰ Fahd cited in al-Rasheed, M. (1996) God, the King and the Nation: Saudi Arabia in the 1990s. *Middle East Journal*. 50 (3). p. 366.

⁴⁵¹ al-Rasheed, M. (1996) God, the King and the Nation: Saudi Arabia in the 1990s. *Middle East Journal*. 50 (3). p. 360, 365.

⁴⁵² Wilson, P. & Graham, D. (1994) *Saudi Arabia: The Coming Storm*. New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc.. p. 62

an unofficial one, by which the Kingdom would enjoy protection from its American allies in exchange for agreements related to oil-sales. This was crucial for the Kingdom as its armed forces were weak, despite large expenditures on military equipment, as of result of Ibn Saud and his successors' reluctance to build an army, in fear that such a force could instigate a rebellion against the regime,⁴⁵³ as happened in Egypt during the 1952 Free Officers' coup d'état, as well as in neighbouring Iraq during the Golden Square coup and again during the 1958 coup d'état which overthrew Iraq's Hashemite monarchy. Receiving his early education at Saudi Arabia's Prince's School - a school set by Ibn Saud specifically for the Saud family's education - alongside being the oldest brother of the important "Sudairi seven clan"- the largest group of full brothers born to Ibn Saud's favorite wife⁴⁵⁴ - Fahd can be thought to have appropriated the importance of US-Saudi economic and defense ties for regime security, from a young age, alongside that of the Saud-Wahhab ties. Indeed, Fahd has been described as "more pro-American [than] many of the other influential princes"⁴⁵⁵ and so important did Saudi Arabia's alliance with the US become to Fahd, that it has been described as "his most cherished relationship."⁴⁵⁶

6.2 Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud's Foreign Policy Doctrine.

Fahd's worldview, comprised of his religious beliefs formed by a Wahhabi belief-community, if by virtue of the Wahhabi-Saud symbiosis rather than his personal faith, alongside an affinity for both Western culture and diplomatic relations. This translated, roughly, into a foreign policy doctrine

⁴⁵³ Ochsenswald, W. (1981) Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Revival. *Middle East Studies*. 1981. p. 272.

⁴⁵⁴ Hassa bint Ahmed Al Sudairi, mother of the Sudairi Seven, was one of Ibn Saud's (approximately) twenty-two wives, but had a special status as she was of the important Sudairi family from the Nejd region, the birthplace of the Wahhabi ideology, whose support was crucial for Ibn Saud's consolidation of the modern Saudi Arabian state; and because she produced the highest amount of sons which, as per tradition in Saudi society, elevates the status of a wife. Taheri, A. (2012) Saudi Arabia: Change Begins with the Family. *American Foreign Policy Interests: The Journal of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy*. 34 (3). p. 138.

⁴⁵⁵ Korany, B. (1984) Defending the Faith: the Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia. In Korany, B. and Dessouki, A. E. H. (1984) *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press. p. 260.

⁴⁵⁶ Foreign Policy (2015) In With the Old in the New Saudi Arabia. [Online] Available from: <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/25/in-with-the-old-in-the-new-saudi-arabia-king-salman/> [Accessed: 15 January, 2015].

which aimed, on the one hand, at maintaining a strong alliance with the U.S., based on the Kingdom's dependency on the latter above all for defence purposes and, possibly, reinforced by Fahd's personal affinity for the West. On the other hand, Fahd's foreign policy doctrine aimed at assuming a leadership role in the Arab world. Due to the indistinguishability between Fahd and Islam as a result of the historic symbiosis between the Al Saud family and the Wahhabi establishment, as well as of the incessant discursive efforts by Fahd, and other ruling members of the royal family, to conflate the Al Saud family with Islam, the tenet of Fahd's foreign policy to take a leadership position in the Arab world necessarily became one defined by Islam. The doctrine is reflected in Fahd's statement to US leaders, "After Allah, we can count on the United States."⁴⁵⁷

Reconciling the two foreign policy tenets - maintaining a strong US alliance and assuming an *Islamic* leadership role in inter-Arab affairs - was, given the *Ulema's* conspicuous view of the Americans as infidels, far from a straightforward task, but one that Fahd necessarily needed to take on. As Gause III (2002) and Piscatori (1983) have noted, this conundrum - faced not only by Fahd, but also by the Saudi Kingdom's leaders that came before and after him - resulted in a non-sequential foreign policy by which foreign policy leaders have gone back and forth between the two tenets; throwing their support behind an Islamic cause one day, and supported or reached out to the US on another, despite any apparent contradictions between such actions.⁴⁵⁸ As the following sections 4.4 and 4.5 will show, so too was the case with Fahd, who took on a leadership role on behalf of the Islamic, Arab world in the context of the Camp David Accords, opposing that initiative

⁴⁵⁷ Lacey, R. (2009) *Inside the Kingdom: Kings, Clerics, Modernists, Terrorists, and the Struggle for Saudi Arabia*. Toronto. Penguin Canada. p. 72.

⁴⁵⁸ Piscatori, J. (1983) Islamic Values and National Interest: The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia. In Dawisha, A. (ed.) *Islam in Foreign Policy*. Cambridge; Melbourne; New York: Cambridge University Press. p. 46-49 and Gause III, G. F. (2002) The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia. In: Hinnebusch, R. and Ehteshami, A. (eds.) *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc. p. 202.

- in which the US was highly involved, and would have preferred Saudi support - at least partly, on Islamic grounds. In the context of Operation Desert Storm and the ensuing Gulf war, however, he invited US troops into the Kingdom, and kept them there, in spite of a growing opposition to that decision from explicitly religious sources, including many from the religious establishment.

6.3 Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the Camp David Accords and the “Palestinian issue”

When Egyptian President Anwar Sadat entered into the Camp David talks with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin in March of 1978, then, Crown Prince, Fahd joined other Arab and Iranian leaders in publicly expressing condemnation of the agreement and called for its abandonment. The Kingdom's took the following official position:

The attitude of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the Middle East problem and the issue of Palestine is firm and clear. It derives from the Arabs' unanimous attitude that the issue of Palestine is the core of the Middle East problem, and that a just and comprehensive solution cannot be achieved unless Israel withdraws from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967, including, first and foremost, Holy Jerusalem, to which Arab sovereignty must be restored.⁴⁵⁹

This position was different from that which Fahd had initially taken, at the Baghdad Summit in November 1978, when he was the only one amongst the Arab leaders there who argued to take less drastic measures against Egypt than the harsh political and economic sanctions that the rest of the

⁴⁵⁹ Government of Saudi Arabia cited in Dawisha (1983) Saudi Arabia and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: The Ups and Fowns of Pragmatic Moderation. *International Journal*. 38 (4). p. 679-80.

summit participants supported. When Fahd finally joined in the collective Arab condemnation of Egypt, Sadat was reportedly “personally annoyed at Crown Prince Fahd, who he feels went back on his word at the Baghdad summit conference” and “refused even to receive a conciliatory message from Fahd.”⁴⁶⁰ It was different, too, from the impression that he had given US President Carter, who when asked in an interview in 1978 about the lack of encouragement for the Camp David Accords from Saudi Arabia, said:

I have not been disappointed with the Saudi Arabians' response to the peace talks. We obviously would like for everyone in the world to endorse the Camp David agreements without any caveats at all. But none of the Saudi Arabian leaders [...] condemned the talks or rejected them or closed the door for future support and encouragement. There are three elements that any Arab leader cannot, in good conscience, endorse or avoid. One is the matter of sovereignty over the West Bank, Gaza Strip. And of course, when I say "Arab leaders," I'm including President Sadat. The other one is the question of eastern Jerusalem and the control of the Moslem holy places by Moslems. And the third one is the resolution of the Palestinian question. We always use the phrase "in all its aspects." And I think that this concern by the Saudis has been expressed in very moderate terms. They have been complimentary about the progress that might evolve from the Camp David

⁴⁶⁰ THE WASHINGTON POST (1978) Post-Camp David Split Sours Egypt's Ties to Saudi Arabia [Online] 9th December. Available from: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1978/12/09/post-camp-david-split-sours-egypts-ties-to-saudi-arabia/ cb821195-f536-418b-a5c8-ba29c5c7ed1c/>. Accessed: February 1, 2015.

talks, and I have not detected any attitude on their part, even surreptitiously, to influence others to condemn the talks or to work against them.⁴⁶¹

The perceptions of both Sadat and Carter suggest that Fahd, in line with his foreign policy doctrine, sought to take a leadership role in the joint Arab stance vis-a-vis the Israel-Palestinian issue. In 1981, he took a more public step in that direction, by announcing the Fahd Plan; an eight-point peace plan that was, at its core a reiteration of United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 and 338,⁴⁶² proposing that Arab states jointly call for Israeli withdrawal from the Palestinian territories occupied during the six-day war, including East Jerusalem. The Plan's seventh point which called for "the right for all nations in the area to live in peace", though welcomed by the Americans who viewed it as implicitly recognizing Israeli statehood, was denounced by the Arabs for the same reason.⁴⁶³ Syria, Libya and Iraq demonstrated particular opposition to the plan's seventh point, with the Libyan Foreign Minister, Adulati Obeidi, stating that "The Saudis are worse than Sadat [...] At least Sadat did it alone. Sadat was shot for treason, and now the Arab states are being asked to endorse mass treason".⁴⁶⁴ The plan was ridiculed by hard-line Arab opposition states, which referred to it as an "American proposal" and "Camp Fahd".⁴⁶⁵ From across the Gulf, Khomeini attacked the Fahd Plan on the grounds that it was "inconsistent with Islam,"⁴⁶⁶ a message that was

⁴⁶¹ THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY PROJECT (1978) Jimmy Carter: Interview With the President Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With Editors and News Directors. [Online] Available from: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29987>. Accessed: 1 February, 2015.

⁴⁶² The eight points of the plan specifically called for the following: First, Israeli withdrawal from all Arab territories taken in the Six Day War, including Arab (East) Jerusalem; second, the dismantling of Israeli settlements in the territories captured in 1967; third, the assurance of the freedom of worship for all religions in the holy sites; fourth, the emphasis of the rights of the Palestinian nation, including compensation for those who do not wish to return; fifth, a brief transition period for Gaza and the West Bank under the auspices of the United Nations; sixth, the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital; seventh, the right for all nations in the area to live in peace; and, eight, the UN or some of its members to guarantee the implementation of the above-mentioned principles. Razvi, M. 'The Fahd Peace Plan', *Pakistan Pakistan Horizon*, 34 (4), 1981, p. 48

⁴⁶³ Razvi, M. (1981) The Fahd Peace Plan. *Pakistan Horizon*. 34 (4) p. 49.

⁴⁶⁴ Kifner, J. (1981) Saudi Plan is Dividing Arabs at Fez. *New York Times*. [Online] 25th November. Available from <http://www.nytimes.com/1981/11/25/world/saudi-plan-is-dividing-arabs-at-fez.html> [Accessed: December 5th, 2014].

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ NEW YORK TIMES (1981) Khomeini Rules out Saudi's Peace Terms as Contrary to Islam. [Online] 18th November. Available from: www.nytimes.com/1981/11/18/world/khomeini-rules-out-saudis-peace-terms-as-contrary-to-islam.html. Accessed: 1 February, 2015

reiterated by Iran's revolutionary pilgrims who used their annual *hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca) to shout the slogan "Fahd, the Israeli Shah" whilst brandishing posters of Khomeini outside Mecca's Grand Mosque.⁴⁶⁷

Khomeini's attack, and that of his followers, confirm what Carter pointed out in his interview years prior, namely that "any Arab leader cannot, in good conscience endorse or avoid, [the] question of eastern Jerusalem and the control of the Moslem holy places by Moslems." Dawisha (1983) makes a further observation, noting that the stance Arab leaders took on this question constituted the standard by which their merits and demerits were judged⁴⁶⁸ which, for Saudi Arabia, due to its position as the Guardian of Islamic Holy sites in Mecca and Medina, meant that it could not be seen to stray away from the "Islamic line" vis-a-vis the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. That "Islamic line" was one set partly by itself through, for example, the following official announcement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has a long lasting stance on the Palestinian Issue since the era of its founder King Abdul Aziz al Saud. This enduring stance was first declared in 1935, at the conference on the Palestinian issue (Madrid Round Table Conference), until the current era of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been backing and supporting the Palestinian issue in all its different phases and levels (politically, economically, and socially); since the

⁴⁶⁷ Lacey, R. (2010) *Inside the Kingdom: Kings, Clerics, Modernists, Terrorists and the Struggle for Saudi Arabia*. London: Arrow Books. p. 101.

⁴⁶⁸ Dawisha, A. (1983) Saudi Arabia and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: The Ups and Fowns of Pragmatic Moderation. *International Journal*. 38 (4). p, 679.

Kingdom strongly believes that these supporting efforts are an Arab and Islamic duty.⁴⁶⁹

In this statement, supporting the Palestinian issue in its political, social and economic aspects, is linked to an Arab and *Islamic* duty. In another statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a similar rationale is presented; that the Kingdom's financial and moral support to the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Authority was given "out of the Kingdom's obligation towards both Arab and Muslim issues."⁴⁷⁰ The Palestinian issue becomes particularly Islamized when the dimension of East Jerusalem is emphasized, due to it being the home of Islam's third holiest site, *Al-Haram al-Sharif* (the Noble Precinct), from which the Prophet Mohammad is thought to have ascended to heaven.⁴⁷¹ Had it not been so before, Jerusalem became framed as a decidedly Islamic concern by the Kingdom's *Ulema* at an international gathering where it condemned the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem in 1967, in the following terms: "[The usurpers] tore down several Muslim sites, including mosques, schools, and homes, all of which were held by religious endowments [...]"⁴⁷² As Quandt (1981) notes, being the guardian of the two Holiest Islamic sites of Mecca and Medina, and the birthplace of Islam, placed an expectation from Arab and Muslim states in the region on Saudi Arabia to voice its condemnation of Israel's occupation of Jerusalem, given that city's special status in Islam.⁴⁷³ Dawisha (1983) similarly observes that, following Israel's occupation of Jerusalem, the

⁴⁶⁹ SAUDI ARABIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. (n.d.) Kingdom Stance on the Palestinian issue. [Online] Available from: <http://www.mofa.gov.sa/sites/mofaen/KingdomForeignPolicy/Pages/PalestineCause34652.aspx> Accessed: 1 February, 2015.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁷¹ The Muslim belief is based on the Quranic passage stating 'Glory to Him who caused His servant to journey by night from the sacred place of worship [Mecca] to the further place of worship, which We have encircled with blessing, in order that We might show him some of our signs'.²¹ The 'further place', although not its location not specified in the Quran, is an accepted reference to the *al-Aqsa* (the further) mosque which is located on what Muslims refers to as *al-Haram al-Sharif* (the Noble Precinct), and which by Jews, in turn, is thought to be location where Solomon's ancient temple once stood, referred to by them as 'Temple Mount'. Jerusalem's *Al-Haram al-Sharif* is also believed by most Muslims to be the place where the Prophet Mohammad's *mi'raj* (ascendancy to heaven) took place. Specifically, Mohammad is thought to, alongside the archangel Gabriel, have passed through the seven heavens before reaching the throne of Allah in the highest heaven where he was taught how to perform the mandatory Muslim prayers. A shrine has been built on *Al-Haram al-Sharif* around the rock on which Mohammad is thought to have had his foot when ascending, and serves as a reminder of the Prophet's second journey. Piscatori, J. (2011) Religion and realpolitik: Islamic responses to the Gulf War. In: Volpi, F. *Political Islam: A Critical Reader*. New York: Routledge. p. 97.

⁴⁷² Piscatori, J. (2011) Religion and realpolitik: Islamic responses to the Gulf War. In: Volpi, F. *Political Islam: A Critical Reader*. New York, Routledge. p. 98.

⁴⁷³ Quandt, W. (1981) *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s: Foreign Policy, Security and Oil*. Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, p. 31.

Riyadh government, could not be seen “to be abandoning the struggle to restore the revered Islamic shrine to Arab sovereignty.”⁴⁷⁴ Very likely due to this rationale, Fahd threatened a *jihad* to establish a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, in response to Israel’s proclamation of Jerusalem as its eternal capital in August 1980.⁴⁷⁵ At a news-conference, Fahd’s foreign minister, Prince Saud al Faisal, furthermore expressed that the Moslem world had hopes that American President Reagan would alter his Middle East policy, and take Arab and Islamic demands about Israeli withdrawal from East Jerusalem, into account.⁴⁷⁶ Similarly, on the Kingdom’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Al Qods* (Jerusalem) is identified as a Holy site and, rationale to prevent its “Judaization,” based on the need to preserve its Arab and *Islamic* roots:

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia supports Al Qods Fund in order to fights the Judaization to preserve the Arab and Islamic style of Al Qods, and to enhance the Palestinian struggle in both Al Qods and other Palestinian Territories.⁴⁷⁷

Arguably more than at any other point in the Kingdom’s history, was the Palestinian issue an Islamic one, over an Arab one during the period of the Camp David Accords. Khomeini’s discursive efforts to make it so, including his well-known proclamation that “Iran’s revolution would not be complete until the Palestinians won theirs,”⁴⁷⁸ played a large role in this, with implications for Saudi Arabia whose Palestinian and Shi’a populations were mobilized by the Ayatollah. Khomeini’s

⁴⁷⁴ Dawisha (1983) Saudi Arabia and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: The Ups and Fowns of Pragmatic Moderation. *International Journal*. 38 (4). p. 679.

⁴⁷⁵ Aikman, D.; Johnson, M.; Stewart, W., ‘Jihad For Jerusalem The Saudis try to lure Egypt’s Sadat back into the Arab fold’, *Time*, 116 (8), p. 32.

⁴⁷⁶ Rome News Tribune (1981) Move to regain sovereignty over Jerusalem. ‘Holy war’ is urged against Israel. [online] 27th January. Available from: <http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=348&dat=19810127&id=EJskAAAAIIBAJ&sjid=jiDAAAIAIBAJ&pg=2975,3373315> [Accessed: December 10th, 2014].

⁴⁷⁷ SAUDI ARABIA MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. (n.d.) Kingdom Stance on the Palestinian issue. [Online] Available from: <http://www.mofa.gov.sa/sites/mofaen/KingdomForeignPolicy/Pages/PalestineCause34652.aspx> Accessed: 1 February, 2015.

⁴⁷⁸ Cooley, K. (1978-79) Iran, the Palestinians, and the Gulf. *Foreign Affairs*. p. 1017.

Islamization efforts were furthermore echoed by the Kingdom's own *Ulema*, with its paramount religious scholar, Sheikh Abd al-Aziz Bin Baz, saying of the Palestinian problem that "[it was] an Islamic problem first and last [and Muslims] must fight an Islamic jihad against the Jews until the land returns to its owners."⁴⁷⁹ Such discourse occurred at a time when religious sentiment intensified in Saudi Arabia which manifested most conspicuously in the 1979 Grand Mosque seizure by a group of Islamist extremists opposed to the *Ulema's* perceived cooperation with the Westernized Saud regime. Fahd responded to religious trends by reinforcing his religious credentials, including changing his official title from "His Majesty" to "Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques" to opening the the Islamic University of Umm al-Qura. As chapter 3 discussed, Saudi society more generally saw a rise in religious television and radio programmes,⁴⁸⁰ just as the Kingdom's financial aid to Islamic causes worldwide rose significantly.⁴⁸¹

Clearly, this intensifying religious sentiment alongside the broader condemnation of the Camp David Accords on religious grounds emanating from both within Iran and abroad, did not altogether dictate Fahd's foreign policy on the Palestinian issue. Had it done so, he would not, as Carter and Sadat perceived, have been willing to take a "moderate" stance on the issue nor gone against his Baghdad Pact agreement and sent a conciliatory message to Sadat, much less proposed his eight-point Peace Plan in 1981. That said, Fahd certainly did appropriate the "Islamic" line vis-a-vis the Israeli-Palestinian issue as far as his discourse was concerned, which rationalized his support of the Palestinian issue and, especially, Jerusalem, with reference to Islam. This shift, I argue, comes a result of Fahd's identity, which - by virtue of him being a royal leader of the Islamic Kingdom - is necessarily and intricately tied to Islam, thus placing upon him, the expectation to respond to the

⁴⁷⁹ Bin Baz cited in Piscatori, J. (2011) Religion and realpolitik: Islamic responses to the Gulf War. In Völpi, F. (ed.) *Political Islam: A Critical Reader*. New York, Routledge. p. 98.

⁴⁸⁰ Aarts, P and Nonneman, G. (eds.) (2005) *Saudi Arabia in the Balance: Political Economy, Society, Foreign Affairs*. London: Hurst & Company Publishers Ltd. p. 61.

⁴⁸¹ Piscatori, J. (2011) Religion and realpolitik: Islamic responses to the Gulf War. In: Völpi, F. (ed.) *Political Islam: A Critical Reader*. New York: Routledge. p. 97.

Camp David Accords, according to “the Islamic line.” This can moreover only be thought to have intensified in light of the Islamization trends in the region and within Saudi Arabia at the time.

6.4 Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Operation Desert Shield and the Gulf War

On 2 August, 1990 Iraqi President Saddam Hussein launched an invasion into neighboring Kuwait and, having defeated the unprepared Kuwaiti Armed Forces within days, annexed the small Gulf monarchy declaring it the nineteenth province of Iraq. Iraqi presence in Kuwait meant that Hussein and his forces were within striking distance of Saudi oil fields and could potentially conquer Saudi Arabia in its entirety in a matter of three days.⁴⁸² In combination with Hussein’s hostile rhetoric and existing tensions between him and the Saudi regime, Iraq’s annexation of Kuwait posed a significant security threat to Saudi Arabia and, by extension, to the U.S., its primary oil-trading partner and key ally in the Gulf following Iran’s Islamic Revolution. After a meeting with US Defence Secretary Dick Cheney, General Colin Powell and General Norman Schwarzkopf in which King Fahd was shown satellite pictures of Iraqi forces moving towards the Saudi Arabian border, the King invited foreign troops to Saudi soil. According to then U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom, Charles Freeman, Fahd was “[...] shaken by what he saw in those photos” and, following Schwarzkopf’s proposed American response to Hussein’s actions said “Come [to Saudi Arabia].”⁴⁸³ Ambassador Freeman recalls that when advised by then Crown Prince Abdullah to make further consultation before agreeing to the Americans’ plan of action, Fahd responded that “There’s no time [...] if we delay may end up like Kuwait; there is no Kuwait anymore [...] its territory consists of hotel rooms in Cairo and Paris and London,” to which Abdullah said “I take your point; I agree.”⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁸² Kepel, G. (2006) *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*. London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd. p. 205.

⁴⁸³ Documentary Channel (2015) *Operation Desert Storm: The Persian Gulf War*. [Online] [Accessed: 15 March, 2015] Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=db7-Hlf33zg> 1:20: 27 - 1: 21: 16.

Shortly after, the build-up of forces and defense of Saudi Arabia, codenamed Operation Desert Shield, commenced, bringing hundreds of thousands of foreign troops into the Kingdom. Most of them were American and non-Muslim, and with them, to a country that otherwise forbade the practicing of non-Islamic religions, came Christian priests. Seemingly aware that their presence would seem at odds with the *Ulema's wahhabi* doctrine which viewed non-Muslims as infidels, Fahd delivered a speech roughly a week after Operation Desert Shield's commencement in which he assured citizenry's that the his invitation of foreign troops to the Kingdom was based of necessity rather than choice:

[you] undoubtedly know that the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had exerted all that it could in effort and attempts with the Governments of the Iraqi Republic and the state of Kuwait, for the sake of containing the dispute that has risen between the two countries.⁴⁸⁴ However, with great regret, matters developed in the opposite direction to what we were endeavoring; in fact, opposite to the aspirations of the peoples of the Islamic and Arab nations, and all the peace-loving countries of the world.⁴⁸⁵ Thus the Government of the U.S.A. and the British Government took the initiative, on the basis of the relations of friendship which link the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and these states, to send air and land forces in order to back the Saudi armed forces in performing its duty to defend the homeland and the citizens [...]⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸⁴ NEW YORK TIMES (1990) Confrontation in the Gulf; Excerpts From King Fahd's Speech to Saudi. [Online] Available from: <http://www.nytimes.com/1990/08/10/world/confrontation-in-the-gulf-excerpts-from-king-fahd-s-speech-to-saudis.html> [Accessed: 15 January, 2015].

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid.

Though not in nearly as much depth as in other speeches, Fahd here invokes Islam to reinforce his message to the Saudi people that the Kingdom, in line with Islamic teachings, is a peace-loving nation that has joined other peace-loving friends in expelling an aggressor. More significantly, Fahd approached the *Ulema* - specifically a gathering of 350 Islamic scholars and leaders, showing to them American satellite pictures of Iraqi troops moving towards the Saudi Arabian border - in order to for his decision to invite foreign troops into the country to be recognised by Islamic law. Following the meeting, Shaykh Abd al-Aziz ibn Baz publicly released a *fatwa* decreeing that,

Even though the Americans are, in the conservative religious view, equivalent to non-believers as they are not Muslims, they deserve support because they are here to defend Islam.⁴⁸⁷

Though Fahd (re)gained religious legitimacy from Bin Baz' *fatwa*, that legitimacy would simultaneously be denounced by Saddam Hussein. In response to repeated calls by the United Nations Security Council for Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait through a series of resolutions, Hussein launched an "initiative" in which he tied his consideration of disengagement from Kuwait to the withdrawal of Israel from the Occupied Palestinian territories and that of America from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region, just as he called for the liberation of Islam's three holiest sites in Jerusalem, Mecca and Medina.⁴⁸⁸ Furthermore, Hussein described Saudi Arabia as an American protectorate and characterised its regime as infidel for allowing American troops in the birthplace of Islam.⁴⁸⁹ That such critique should come from Hussein, the leader of a decidedly secular-nationalist

⁴⁸⁷ Shaykh Abd al-Aziz ibn Baz quoted in Alianak, S. (2007) *Middle Eastern Leaders and Islam: A Precarious Equilibrium*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc. p. 82.

⁴⁸⁸ This referred to the *Al Aqsa* (the Farthest Mosque) in Jerusalem, and *Al Masjid al Haram* (the Grand Mosque) and *Al Masjid an-Nabawi* (the Prophet's Mosque) in Mecca and Medina, respectively.

⁴⁸⁹ Pape, R. A. (1996) *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War*. New York: Cornell University Press, p. 215; Kepel, G. (2006) *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*. London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., p. 206.

Baathist state, was far from natural, and very possibly speaks more of Hussein's intention to secure political gains, than it does of his motivation to liberate Islam's holy sites. His efforts to delegitimize Fahd and the Saudi regime were, nonetheless, credible enough that they mobilized Muslims near and far: for example, a preacher of Jerusalem's Al Aqsa mosque condemned the Saudi leadership before 10,000 worshippers, suggesting that "Arab leaders are giving Moslem lands to the Americans"⁴⁹⁰ and Jordan's Muslim Brotherhood encouraged Muslims "to purge the holy land of Palestine and Najd and Hijaz [provinces of Saudi Arabia] from the Zionists and imperialists".⁴⁹¹ Outside of the region, reactions were similarly condemning: protesters outside Saudi Arabia's embassy in London shouted "shame" and "death to Fahd" in anger over the Saudi regime's willingness to host "the enemies of Islam," just as Muslims in China thought the Kingdom's hosting of American troops to be a violation of Islamic territory's integration.⁴⁹² More to it, some regional governments took heed, if not to Saddam's rhetoric, then to international populist displays of outrage. In the Organization of Islamic Conference, for example, Jordan, Sudan and the PLO refused to condemn Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, while Libya abstained from taking a stance on the issue.⁴⁹³ This marked a difference from a hitherto consensus around Saudi Arabia as a leader in Islamic international organizations, where its diplomatic efforts had moreover seen Muslim states agree to the idea of spreading and living by Sunni Islamic values.⁴⁹⁴ Indeed, it such a consensus which constrained Fahd's leadership aspirations vis-a-vis the Camp David Accords, as we saw above.

⁴⁹⁰ Piscatori, J. (2011), Religion and realpolitik: Islamic responses to the Gulf War. In Völpi, F. (ed.) *Political Islam: A Critical Reader*. New York: Routledge. p. 98.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid.

⁴⁹² NEW YORK TIMES (1991) War in the Gulf: Allies; Theme of Reaction: Unshaken Unity. [Online] 25th February. Available from: <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/02/25/world/war-in-the-gulf-allies-theme-of-reaction-unshaken-unity.html> [Accessed: 3 February, 2015].

⁴⁹³ Kepel, G. (2006) *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*. London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd. p. 74 .

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid. p. 205-6.

When no Iraqi concessions had materialised by the 15 January 1991 deadline set by the UNSC, a US-led coalition launched a military assault on Iraqi forces in Kuwait, code-named Operation Desert Storm. Hussein suffered defeat and Kuwait was officially liberated on 24 February 1991. As with Operation Desert Shield in the previous year, Sheikh Bin Baz issued a *fatwa*, this time to sanction the use of force against Iraqis, declaring the fight against Hussein, a *jihad* and sanctioning all Muslims and non-Muslims to engage in war with Iraq.⁴⁹⁵ So harshly was the *fatwa* worded that, according to one religious scholar who agreed to comment to the New York Times on the condition of anonymity, “the *fatwa* removes any doubt about the religious justification for asking non-Muslims to help this country attack another.”⁴⁹⁶ Around the same time, the regime nonetheless employed additional measures to reinforce its Islamic credentials, imposing restrictions on the religious practices that Jewish and Christian troops could practice whilst in the Kingdom, just as it went to great lengths to win the support of institutions like the centre of Islamic learning, Al-Azhar, and of the Muslim World League. Despite Bin Baz *fatwas* and the regime’s efforts to bolster its religious legitimacy, the domestic consequences of Operation Desert Shield and the subsequent Gulf war remained dire for Fahd. By the time of the Gulf war’s termination on 28 February, 1991, a segment of the *Ulema* who called for further Islamization of laws and regulations through a petition of February 1991, signed by the head of the *Ulema*, the spokesman of official Islam in the country, various judges, professors and teachers.⁴⁹⁷ Moreover, this opposition was decidedly opposed, not only to the regime’s hosting of foreign troops, which they referred to as “an alignment of the

⁴⁹⁵ Piscatori, J. (2011) Religion and realpolitik: Islamic responses to the Gulf War. In *Political Islam: A Critical Reader*, ed. Frederic Volpi. New York: Routledge. p. 200.

⁴⁹⁶ NEW YORK TIMES (1991) War in the Gulf: Muslims; Saudis Decree Holy War on Hussein. [Online]. 20th January. Available from: <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/01/20/world/war-in-the-gulf-muslims-saudis-decree-holy-war-on-hussein.html>. [Accessed: 15 January, 2015].

⁴⁹⁷ al-Rasheed, M. (1996) God, the King and the Nation: Saudi Arabia in the 1990s, *Middle East Journal*, 50 (3), pp. 361-363.

Kingdom and the enemies of God”⁴⁹⁸ and an “illegitimate [alliance];”⁴⁹⁹ but to part of the *Ulema* which had accepted and legitimized, in the form of a *fatwa*, the regime’s policy. This critique echoed that made years earlier, in 1979, by the Islamist extremists that attacked the Grand Mosque and one that would, eventually culminate in giving rise to the same fundamentalist strand of religious dissidence.

Similarly to above, when Fahd’s identity as a leader of the *Islamic* Kingdom of Saudi Arabia placed an expectation on him to adopt an “Islamic line” vis-a-vis the Camp David Accords, so too did his *Islamic* identity, in the context of Operation Desert Storm and the Gulf war, place expectations on him to act more “Islamic” than to invite the “infidels” onto Holy Islamic land. One can sense the *wahhabi* teaching, described earlier, of Fahd belief-community, that “every non-Muslim is an enemy of ours”⁵⁰⁰ along with its general demonization of the West, though, ironically, the *Ulema* itself was, by virtue of *ijtihad*, able to see the religious-grounded necessity for Fahd’s foreign policy. By the same token, Fahd’s *Islamic* identity as the ruler of Saudi Arabia made him particularly vulnerable to Saddam’s “initiative” by which the latter tied his withdrawal from Kuwait to the withdrawal of “infidel forces from the Holy Land” of Saudi Arabia; a position that many international Muslims seemingly galvanized around. I argue that, like in the Camp David Accords, religion placed expectations for Fahd to take an “Islamic line” in his foreign policy vis-a-vis Operation Desert Shield and Gulf War and, employing religious discourse, Fahd sought to legitimize himself and his foreign policy (albeit unsuccessfully, in the eyes of many). Unlike above, however, religion did not constrain Fahd in implementing his foreign policy. Most unexpectedly, perhaps, though not in light of Ibn Tamiyya’s teachings on *ijtihad*, it was religious legitimation - not

⁴⁹⁸ Documentary Channel (2015) *Operation Desert Storm: The Persian Gulf War* [Online] [Accessed: 15 March, 2015] Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=db7-Hlf33zg> 1:23: 27 - 1: 24: 00.

⁴⁹⁹ Alianak, S. (2007) *Middle Eastern Leaders and Islam: A Precarious Equilibrium*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., p. 82.

⁵⁰⁰ Nonneman, G. (eds.) *Saudi Arabia in the Balance: Political Economy, Society, Foreign Affairs*. London: Hurst & Company Publishers Ltd. p. 381.

constraint - that came from the source - the *Ulema* - which habitually *is* a constraining force.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has argued, and shown, that Fahd's foreign policy cannot be understood without reference to religion. Though Fahd was not seemingly a pious man - he certainly espoused nowhere near the level of piety that Menachem Begin and Ayatollah Khomeini did - Fahd, as the embodiment of the Islamic Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, was, in many ways, an Islamic leader, above all else, if not in his own eyes then in the eyes of others domestically and beyond. The identity of the Saudi state is intricately and necessarily tied to Islam, above all due to the politico-religio symbiosis forged between leaders of the al-Wahhab tribe and al-Saud dynasty in the mid-sixteenth century. The steadfastness of this symbiosis through the centuries has meant that Saudi Arabia has not developed a national identity alongside its Islamic identity; as al-Rasheed (2010) alerted us to, the Islamic and national identity are one and the same; something which, moreover, is consolidated continuously whether through the discourse of the Kingdom's leaders, including Fahd, or through "national" symbols like the Saudi Arabian flag in which Islamic symbols feature throughout.

As the chapter has shown, this had implications for Fahd who - as other of the Kingdom's royal leaders - was expected to be the embodiment of the Saudi Arabian state. In the context of Fahd's foreign policy vis-a-vis the Camp David Accords, this meant that Fahd was expected to take an "Islamic line," which - as promoted by himself and his Foreign Ministry - drew a connection between the Palestinian issue and Islam. That was a line different than one Fahd might have taken - one that he seemingly *did* want to take - by which he would have assumed a moderate role vis-a-vis the Accords. I have argued that, for this reason, religion's role in this context was constraining. This constraint is moreover reinforced by the specifics of Fahd's Wahhabist belief

community, which held that any *bida* (innovation) from the pure Wahhabi doctrinal interpretation is a deviation from the Prophet's teachings - in this regard, the West and Jews in particular become a subject of hostility. As such, collaboration with them in the context of the Camp David Accord - by many accounts, an Islamic issue - would be, indeed was, unacceptable.

In the context of Fahd's policy vis-a-vis Operation Desert Shield and the Gulf War, Islam's primary role, was not one of constraint, but one of de-legitimization. Despite the fact that the Kingdom's religious authority issued a *fatwa* to provide religious legitimacy for Fahd's foreign policy, it was the perception amongst radical Islamists within the Kingdom, but also Muslims throughout the world, that Fahd's invitation of "infidel" troops onto Islamic land was out of line with the behaviour expected from an Islamic leader. As above, this too can be related to Fahd's Wahhabi belief-community, in that it was a specific article of the Wahhabi belief community which allowed the religious establishment to condone Fahd's invitation of US troops to the Kingdom.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

7.0 Summary of research findings

This thesis set out to answer the research question “*What was the role of religion in Israeli foreign policy under Prime Minister Menachem Begin (1977-1984), Iranian foreign policy under Ayatollah Khomeini (1979-89), and Saudi Arabian foreign policy under Crown Prince, later King, Fahd bin Abdulaziz (1975-95)?*,” and did so with the aim of finding a pattern of regularity across the three case studies that would yield substantive insight into the role of religion in foreign policy. The thesis set out specifically to examine *how* religion played a role in foreign policy, and it thereby distinguished itself from existing literature in the “post-secular IR debate,” which mainly focused on *whether* religion played a role.

As the case studies have argued, and shown, two primary roles of religion were evident across all three, namely that 1) Religion, in the form of “religious beliefs” (or tradition, in the case of Fahd) shaped the respective leaders’ worldview and by extension their foreign policy doctrine and foreign policy outcomes. The foreign policies of Begin, Khomeini and Fahd cannot, then, be understood outside the context of religion; and, that 2) Religious discourse legitimized the leaders and their foreign policies. The leaders’ use of religious discourse for legitimization purposes may reflect their genuine interpretation of doctrine or a “disingenuous” act based on their perceived need to invoke such discourse in order to gain support for a particular foreign policy (discussed further below). In either of these cases, religion’s role as one that legitimizes leaders and their foreign policy, is an important one. This is so as there is a direct relationship between their religious beliefs and foreign policy, if their discourse is indeed based on a genuine interpretation of doctrine. If it is rather a disingenuous act, then there is still an indirect relationship between the two, as a the foreign

policy that is sought to be legitimized would have been formulated based on a worldview featuring religion, in the first place. Moreover, religion's role is one that is distinct from the modernist and Realist understandings discussed in the introduction, as neither of those understandings consider religion influential and, if they do, merely do so in an instrumentalist context. The nuances of the thesis' argument discussed above is fleshed out over the following pages.

The Constructivist-FPA theoretical framework provided a useful intellectual terrain on which to explore the research question and understand the findings. With its analytical focus on the individual foreign policy decision maker and especially insights from its cognitive branch, FPA provided the analytical tools to shape the case study design. Specifically, it highlighted the importance of *perception* shaped by the foreign policy leaders' personal stories, environment and, in the context of the thesis' case studies, "religious beliefs" made up of leaders' individual "faith" and their respective "belief-communities." Given the largely unconstrained decision making environment of Fahd, Khomeini and Begin, and the willful and idiosyncratic personalities of especially the latter two, going below state-level and understanding specific leaders and their respective decision making environment has been crucial. FPA's counterpart in the thesis' theoretical framework, Constructivism, has, as the introduction stipulated, provided an intellectual terrain on which to explore how the religious worldviews of the leaders' in question were shaped by the inter-subjective beliefs they shared with their respective belief-communities, and influenced their respective perceptions of national interest. For Khomeini, Begin and Fahd, respectively, this refers to Twelver Shi'a Islam, Neo-revisionism and Wahhabi Islam and, as the empirical chapters have demonstrated, the characteristics of those belief-communities were identifiable in those leaders' foreign policy outcomes. Apart from the roles of religion mentioned above, two further observations can be made about religion in foreign policy, based on the case study findings.

Religion's interplay with nationalism

In all three of the thesis' case studies there seems to be a fusion, at one point or another, between religion and nationalism. This is most apparent in the cases of Begin and Fahd, but also identifiable in the case of Khomeini. As chapter 4 discussed in detail, Begin's religious beliefs were intricately tied to Jewish historical ties to *Eretz Yisrael* as well as to the nationalism that derived from them. While the excerpts from Begin's private and public discourse drawn upon in the chapter purposely highlight the "religious strand" of Begin's worldview, it does so to show the role of religion in the broader context of Begin's worldview which was equally defined by nationalism. As the discussion of Begin's worldview in section 4.1 of the thesis shows, the two necessarily interplayed with one another and neither can be understood without reference to the other. Similarly, in the case of Fahd; as chapter 6 discussed, Fahd was the embodiment of the Saudi state, whose national identity that was - and is - grounded in a historical symbiosis between Wahhabi Islam, the Al Saud family and the state that was formed as a result of this relationship. By extension, Fahd's "religious tradition" and the worldview that it informed cannot be understood entirely separately from nationalism (nor the Al Saud identity, for that matter.) Of the three leaders, Khomeini religious beliefs were the most separate from nationalism, although, he too, conflated the two on occasions where, as chapter 5 notes, he spoke of, e.g. "the Iranian people" and "the Iranian nation." This interplay between religion and nationalism is not necessarily surprising considering the malleability of religious doctrine and the fact that the leaders operated within the context of a nation-state. Nor does it diminish the argument of this thesis which, most broadly, posits that the foreign policies of Israel, Iran and Saudi Arabia during the leaderships of Begin, Khomeini and Fahd cannot be understood without reference to the religious beliefs of those leaders. It does however suggest that post-secular scholars, when conceptualizing religion and developing their

research agenda would benefit from considering the religious-nationalist relationship (this point is taken up in section 7.2 “pointers and avenues for future research.”)

Religious beliefs are malleable, but important nonetheless

The case studies indicate that the religious beliefs of leaders generally seemed to be shaped according to the context in which the leaders were operating at a given time. Examples from the case study chapters abound, but the following three suffice to get the point across. Begin invoked passages from the book of Ezekiel, to recall Biblical events during which the historic nation of Israel had a friendship or alliance with the cities of Tyre and Sidon in modern-day Lebanon, and did so in order to legitimize the *Israeli invasion of Lebanon* in the face of mounting domestic opposition following IDF and Palestinian casualties in Tyre and Sidon. In the context of the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty some three years prior, and in the context of both public support and vocal dissent from the settler movement, Begin drew on the Prophets Yeshayahu ben Amotz and Micha Hamorashti and their teachings about the abolishment of war, to legitimize Israel’s *Peace Treaty with Egypt*. A similar observation can be made in the case of Khomeini who, in the Iran-Iraq war’s early and middle stages invoked notions of *jihad* and martyrdom to *encourage Iranians to fight, and to continue fighting, Iraq in the name of Islam*; but who, in the context of mounting domestic discontent alongside a significant deterioration of Iran’s economic and military, *ended the Iran-Iraq war for the sake of Islam*. Fahd too, through the Kingdom’s *Ulema*, drew on a *fatwa* to *condone his collaboration with “infidels,”* just as he based his *opposition to the US-led Camp David Accords* on religious grounds (albeit, reluctantly.)

Given these vastly different, even contradicting, pro- and pre-scriptions of religion, given the religiously charged domestic context in which all three leaders were operating, it may be tempting to dismiss religion as but a convenient discursive tool with which leaders could obtain legitimacy for

their desired foreign policy actions. In this context, the religious discourse employed by the leaders in question - or rather the foreign policy practices that it seeks to legitimize - can be thought of as an extension of the foreign policy doctrine that, as we have seen for each of the case studies, was shaped to a greater or lesser extent by the leaders' religious beliefs (or religious tradition, in the case of Fahd). In this light, those outcomes cannot be understood outside the context of religion. Whilst that would by no means render the role of religion an unimportant one, I argue that religion, in the context of its role no. 2 introduced above, is very possibly more "profound" than such, and that the apparent discrepancies in the leaders' discourse - especially in the case of Begin and Khomeini given their seemingly "genuine" faith, compared to Fahd, as well as their honest personalities - in which said discrepancies are likely an indication of their genuine interpretation of the relevant doctrine, in a specific moment and context.

Overlap between religious and "secular" foreign policy outcomes

At different points throughout the thesis, it is suggested that secular leaders may have acted in a similar fashion to the religious leaders that this work focuses on. For example, the secular Jabotinsky in many ways promulgated - indeed he inspired - the same ideology as Begin, albeit in a less "emotionalized" variant. Like Begin, Jabotinsky held that Israeli sovereignty should extend across all of the Land of Israel and that military force should, if necessary, be employed to ensure this. Similarly, Khomeini's decision to prolong the Iran-Iraq war may equally have been formulated by a secular leader seeking to contain domestic discontent at a time when the nation's new constitution and government was yet to be consolidated, just as Fahd's decision to assume a leadership position vis-a-vis the Arab-Israeli conflict could likely have been made by a secular leader thinking along regional balance-of-power principles. This may raise the question of whether religion matters, then, for the final analysis and whether a theoretical move that incorporates

religion is at all worthwhile. I argue that it is very much worthwhile, and I must here refer to the nature of the research question and rationale which hold that the thesis seeks to explain the link between Begin, Khomeini and Fahd's religious beliefs and their foreign policy outcomes. As detailed in section 1.1 in the thesis' introduction, I show that a link exists between the leaders in question and their respective foreign policy doctrines and foreign policy outcomes, based on the important role that - as I show and argue in the case studies - their religious beliefs (and tradition, in the case of Fahd) play in their worldview. In this sense, the thesis is less concerned with what the foreign policy outcomes are - even if they correspond to ones arrived at through "secular" foreign policy decision making - , than it is with understanding them within the context of religion. It is also for this reason that the research question is explored within the context of a FPA-Constructivist theoretical framework, as both of those paradigms stress subjectivity rather than outcome; that is, they make no substantive claims about the nature of agents or content of social structures and interactions, but rather provide a framework for thinking about those properties.⁵⁰¹ Moreover, the thesis does not set out to explain the role of religion against alternative explanations, be they "secular" ones or ones that subsume religion in broader categories of culture or ethnicity. Whilst such explanations may certainly provide valuable insight, this thesis seeks to address the gap in IR literature caused by the fact that it is precisely such studies that currently exist. In other words, existing scholarship favour either "secular", materialist interpretations, or refer to religion as one of many influential variables. The purpose of this thesis has been to move away from them.

7.1 Pointers and avenues for future research

During the process of writing this thesis, a number of pointers and avenues for future research on the study of religion and IR, have crystallized. They are listed below.

⁵⁰¹ Finnemore, M. and Sikkink, K. (2001) TAKING STOCK: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations in Comparative Politics. *Annual Review of Political Science*. 4. p. 395-8.

- **In-depth case studies.**

As noted previously, I adopted three case studies for this project which represent three states defined with reference to three distinct religions, and did so purposefully with the aim of identifying patterns of regularity across distinguishable cases, as such scientific enquiry is particularly interesting for IR. For the post-secular debate, too, which has yet to fully move beyond discussing *whether* as opposed to *how* religion matters in international relations, it was particularly important to develop a research question that would show religion's importance *across* cases, due to the temptation to consider, as IR has done before, a phenomenon like the Islamic Revolution in Iran in which religion has an ostensibly important role, as an anomaly. The aim of my research has, I hope, been fulfilled and, in the meantime, the post-secular debate has rightly grown in substance and reach, as the research initiatives listed in the introductory chapter suggest. Having established *that* religion matters and offered various studies, including this one, to show *how* it matters, the post-secular debate could benefit from studies which prioritize depth over width - that is, studying one case-study in depth rather than various case studies at lesser depth. An interesting approach would be one which studies different foreign policy leaders within, for example, the Islamic State of Iran, over different governments or administrations, as this would allow for the identification of nuances and constants in the leaders' respective religious beliefs as well as in their foreign policies.

- **Adopting a common understanding of religion.**

As chapter 2 of this thesis showed, adopting a common understanding or definition of religion is far from a straightforward task. The critical review and assessment of existing attempts that chapter 2 laid out shows that existing attempts to do so adopt, what I argue, are flawed functionalist or essentialist approaches, or arrive at definitions that are so broad that they could potentially encompass a wide range of phenomena and, by extension, do little to push forward

the study of religion as a phenomenon in and of itself. The work of Sheikh (2012) is an exception to this, as her conceptualization of “communities of believers” allows for substantive study of a particular interpretive belief-community without succumbing to the flaws of the abovementioned approaches.⁵⁰² My approach to understanding “religious beliefs” as an interplay between the individual believer’s “faith” and the shared faith of his or her belief-community, builds on Sheikh’s work and, I hope, constitutes a useful effort to progress the post-secular debate because only when post-secular scholars agree *what* we are studying, can we study successfully. Future definitional efforts moreover ought to account for the interplay between religion and nationalism. Due to the natural tendency for doctrine to develop and, even more, its malleability and nuances which allow for fluid, even contradictory, interpretations and practices, developing a definition of religion is admittedly rendered a difficult task. However, that should not deter post-secular scholars from pursuing this task. Such an endeavor should undoubtedly be informed by scholarship in the fields of Religious Studies, Theology and even Sociology, as scholars in these disciplines, especially the former two, have with few exceptions long a) taken religion “seriously” by acknowledging its importance for the individual and society, and related, b) studied religion as a social phenomena and not, like IR, as one that pertains to the individual only.

• Encouraging, and keeping up, research on Religion and IR despite methodological and conceptual challenges.

In the post-secular debate’s early days, Fox (2001) and Thomas (2005) rightly pointed out that one of the reasons for IR’s neglect of religion was difficulties in measurement, which may particularly have affected Political Science scholars on the Western side of the Pond, who have typically preferred quantitative methodologies to qualitative ones.⁵⁰³ Add to this, of course, the

⁵⁰² See Sheikh, M. K. (2012) How does religion matter? Pathways to religion in International Relations. *Review of International Studies*. 38 (2). p. 374.

⁵⁰³ See i.e. Fox, J. (2001) Religion as an Overlooked Element of International Relations. *International Studies Review* 3 (2). 58-9 and Thomas, S. (2005) The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century, p. 59-63

dominant, post-Westphalian understanding of religion as a set of private beliefs that has prevailed in IR scholarship for most of the discipline's existence, as well as the reflections of Euro-Centrism in IR theory. The post-secular debate has done a fair share to debunk the idea of religion as a privatized affair irrelevant to international relations and, importantly, shown how and why that is the case. Equally, significant steps have been taken by Sheikh (2012) and myself to develop a substantive definition of religion that moves beyond essentialist and functionalist understandings of religion. That said, the study of religion in international relations is and will remain a complex endeavor due to religion's many and context-specific interpretive variants, not to mention the malleability that seems part and parcel of religion in any of its many forms. In the event that such complexity at any point should discourage post-secular scholars and others from studying religion in the context of IR, it would be useful to recall the wise observation that won Friedrich August von Hayek a Nobel Prize in 1974:

While in the physical sciences it is generally assumed, probably with good reason, that any important factor which determines the observed events will itself be directly observable and measurable, in the study of such complex phenomena as the market, which depend on the actions of many individuals, all the circumstances which will determine the outcome of a process [will] hardly ever be fully known or measurable. And while in the physical sciences the investigator will be able to measure what, on the basis of a *prima facie* theory, he thinks important, in the social sciences often that is treated as important which happens to be accessible to measurement. This is sometimes carried to the point where it is demanded that our theories must be formulated in such terms that they refer only to measurable magnitudes. It can hardly be denied that such a demand quite arbitrarily limits the facts

which are to be admitted as possible causes of the events which occur in the real world.⁵⁰⁴

This statement is grounded in von Hayek's specific observation, and indeed what won him the Nobel Prize, that the stock market crash of the early 1970s would not have happened, had scholars of Economics (a social science) been less reluctant to account for variables that were not immediately observable. In my view, international relations faces its own version of a stock market crash, should IR fail to understand the role of religion in international relations. If for no other reason than this one, post-secular scholars should continue in their quest to define and understand religion, just as they should continue to develop research methodologies to understand religion's role. To reinforce the relevance of religion to international relations and IR, I will end this thesis with on the same note that I started it with:

*“God has proven to be alive and well beyond all question”*⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰⁴ Hayek (1974) Prize Lecture. Lecture to the memory of Alfred Nobel, December 11, 1974. http://www.nobelprizeorg/nobel_prizes/economic-sciences/laureates/1974/hayek-lecture.html

⁵⁰⁵ Armstrong, K. (2009) GOD. *Foreign Policy*: 175. p. 55.

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