# *QATAR$^{TM}$ AND A CHANGING CONCEPTION OF SECURITY*

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# QATAR™ AND A CHANGING CONCEPTION OF SECURITY

## Contents

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## Glossary of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADIA – Abu Dhabi Investment Authority

APOC – Anglo-Persian Oil Company

Aramco – Arabian America Oil Company (Now Saudi Aramco)

Centcom – United States Central Command

CFI – Canal France International

CIE – Companion (of the Order of) the Indian Empire

DFI – Doha Film Institute

FCO – Foreign and Commonwealth Office (UK)

FDI – Foreign Direct Investment

GCC – Gulf Cooperation Council

IOC – International Oil Company

IPC – Iraq Petroleum Company

KIA – Kuwait Investment Authority

KSA – Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

LNG – Liquefied Natural Gas

MIA – Museum of Islamic Art (Doha)

MICE industries – Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions Industries

MOF – Ministry of Finance

NAM – Non-Aligned Movement

NGL – Natural Gas Liquefaction

OECD – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OIC – Organisation of Islamic Countries

OPEC – Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries

QF – Qatar Foundation

QFC – Qatar Financial Centre

QGPC – Qatar General Petroleum Company

QIA – Qatar Investment Authority

QMA – Qatar Museums Authority

QMDI – Qatar MICE Development Institute

QNCC – Qatar National Conference Centre

QSI – Qatar Sports Investment

QSTP – Qatar Science and Technology Park

RAF – Royal Air Force (UK)

SNC – Syrian National Council

SOCAL – Californian Standard Oil Company

SWF – Sovereign Wealth Fund

TNC – Trans National Council (Syria)

UAE – United Arab Emirates

UAE – United Arab Republic

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UOG – UAE Offsets Group

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## Introduction

When writing about Qatar it is customary at the beginning to note that it is shaped like a mitten or a thumb and that it is about the size of Yorkshire or Connecticut.[1] That it follows the strict Wahhabi creed of Islam is a key point, which is juxtaposed against Doha's newly sprouted buildings, described as shimmering or glittering in the sunshine.[2] Al Jazeera, the embattled Doha-based news channel, merits a mention as does Qatar's extraordinary success in the race to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Qatar's leading role in the Arab Spring is the latest hook for attention, but still editors unerringly resort to the old clichés describing Qatar as a state with a maverick foreign policy that punches above its weight.[3] Always more entertaining with its titles The Economist prefers to describe Qatar as a 'bouncy bantam' and a 'pygmy with the punch of a giant.'[4]

Noting the bare facts is important but it is the context that is crucial. It is the geographical location – not the shape or necessarily the size – of Qatar that is decisive. Qatar is defined by its 72km land border with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and the 270km sea border with Iran, which runs through the world's largest gas field shared by the two countries. By

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[1] Anthony Shadid, "Qatar Wields an Outsized Influence in Arab Politics," *The New York Times* 14 November 2011.
Steven Goff, "Qatar Gets 2022 World Cup over U.S.; Russia Beats out England for 2018 Event," *The Washington Post*, 08 March 2013 03 December 2010.
Hugh Eakin, "The Strange Power of Qatar," *New York Review of Books* 28 October 2011.
Maike Currie, "The Case for Qatar," *Investors Chronicle* 11 April 2011.
Cameron Barr, "Qatar Stands by Us as War Looms," *The Christian Science Monitor* 10 December 2002.
[2] Anthony Shadid, "Qatar's Capital Glitters Like a World City, but Few Feel at Home," *The New York Times* 29 November 2011.
Larry Luxner, "Qatar's Prosperity as High as Its Geopolitical Ambitions," *The Wasington Diplomat*(02 October 2012)
Jeffrey Fleishman and Noha El-Hannawy, "Qatar's Ambitions Roil Middle East," *Los Angeles Times* 21 April 2009.
Jenny Southan, "Doha's Ambition," *Business Traveller* 20 August 2010.
[3] Yadullah Ijtehadi, "Qatar's Golbal Rise," *Gulf Business* 21 November 2011.
Brandon Friedman, "Qatar: Security Amid Instability," *The Jewish Policy Cetnre: inFocus* V, no. 4 (Winter 2011).
Kessler Oren, "Qatar Punches above Its Diplomatic Weight," *The Jerusalem Post* 3 August 2012.
Elizabeth Dickinson, "Qatar Punches above Its Weight," *The National* 26 September 2012.
David Rosenberg, "Qatar Punches above Its Weight," *The Jerusalem Post* 18 January 2012.
Michael Young, "Pragmatic Diplomacy Enables Qatar to Punch above Weight," *The National* 24 November 2011.
Dominic Moran, "New Qatari Pm, Diplomatic 'Maverick'," *Internaitonal Relations and Security Netwoek (ISN)*(06 April 2007)
David B Roberts, "Punching above Its Weight," *Foreign Policy* (12th April 2011).
[4] "A Bouncy Bantam," *The Economist* 07 September 2006.
"Pygmy with the Punch of a Giant," *The Economist* (5 November 2011).

land mass, Qatar is approximately 187 times smaller than KSA and 144 times smaller than Iran. In terms of population, native Qataris are outnumbered approximately 1:68 by Saudis and 1:272 by Iranians.[5] In terms of military strength, ignoring the fact that Qataris are a minority in their own armed forces (an estimated 10-15 per cent[6]) and including reservists and paramilitary units, 'Qatar' is outnumbered approximately 1:21 by Saudi and 1:159 by Iran.[7]

The same yawning discrepancies in the basic building-blocks of power have been present for centuries. From the late 18th century, when Qatar's modern history can be said to have begun, the typical policy of the principal Sheikh on the Qatari Peninsula was to seek security either with a local tribal alliance or under the aegis of an external guarantor. Leaders in Qatar needed to concentrate their limited resources on shoring up alliances and changing them when possible to secure protection with greater autonomy. Until the 1960s this left few resources over with which to engage in a wider foreign policy or anything but the most meagre domestic developments. Indeed, Qatar developed a reputation as being 'known for being unknown' and as 'the most boring place in the Gulf.' These adages spread over the decades throughout the Gulf summed up Qatar; a country that seldom entered international consciousness before the 1990s. Qatar's role in the Ottoman Empire's denouement was negligible, it played no meaningful role in World War One, World War Two, the Cold War, nor did it play a particularly active part in Arab affairs aside from sporadic donations of foreign aid when oil revenues allowed.

Yet against this quietist historical background, as the 1990s wore-on Qatar began to eschew this modus operandi and instead embarked upon an overtly reactionary and provocative course of action both in foreign and domestic politics. The fundamental question that this thesis seeks to answer is why did Qatar undergo such changes?

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[5] "Key Population Indicators (2011)," *Central Department of Statistics and Information* accessed 26 August 2012.
"Population, Total (1981-2011)," in *Data* (World Bank, Accessed 26 August 2012).
The native population of Qatar used here (275,000) stems from commonly accepted extrapolations of the Qatari population in lieu of available statistics from the Qatari Statistics Authority.

[6] Percentage derived from various interviews and discussions along with examples from, for example, the Battle of Khafji.

[7] *The Military Balance 2010*, (Glasgow: Routledge, 2010).

Domestically, after a coup in 1995, censorship laws were relaxed, municipal elections were called, women were enfranchised, and a new emphasis on education was prioritised. The satellite TV station Al Jazeera was established in 1996. A firm change in external relations began with establishing diplomatic relations with China and the Soviet Union in 1988 without waiting for Saudi Arabia to take the lead. Subsequently, relations were cultivated with Iran and Israel, a deeply anti-establishment policy for a previously stalwart Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) State like Qatar. An American security guarantee was obtained in 1992, while Qatar slowly expanded its aid and political support to groups like Hamas and Hezbollah. Qatar expanded its influence particularly in the 2000s by mediating not only in the Gulf region (Yemen), the Levant (Lebanon), but in the Horn of Africa (Eritrea), West Africa (Mauritania), East Africa (Sudan) and North Africa (Libya).

The diverse international relations were a part of boosting Qatar's visibility across the region. Qatar also focused on increasing its soft power through the promotion of Al Jazeera, hosting world-class sporting and cultural events, and some of the largest conferences in the world such as the 'Doha Round' of World Trade Talks in 2001 and the 18$^{th}$ Conference of the Parties (COP 18) climate change conference in November 2012.

Until the Arab Spring, Qatar avoided undertaking divisive policies preferring to use its reputation as a relatively unbiased and inoffensive state to great effect. Yet with, for example, its heavy diplomatic, material, and military support of the rebel forces in Libya, Qatar can no longer claim to be a neutral state. While support for Qatar's ploys against Libya's Colonel Gaddafi and Syria's President Assad was initially widespread, the staunch financial and political support for many of the emergent Muslim Brotherhood Governments and parties around the region is divisive. Unsurprisingly given the post-revolutionary tumult, most of the new Muslim Brotherhood-dominated Governments are struggling and are deeply unpopular with large sections of society. By so visibly supporting these Governments Qatar is being tarred by association and even the once region-leading Al Jazeera is seeing its ratings plunge thanks to its association with the Qatari state and the assumed Muslim Brotherhood-supporting line that it is believed to tow.

Understanding the genesis of the changes that culminated in Qatar's provocative actions in the Arab Spring and account for the transformation of Qatar's politics both domestically but

particularly externally is the central concern of this thesis. These queries, resistant to immediate explanation, require a systematic approach that firstly delineates exactly what the changes were. A careful analysis comparing Qatar's historical policies with those from the 1990s onwards highlights several ahistorical policies that are either new in character or new in type. These concerns – the US security umbrella; international mediation; international alliance and investments; Al Jazeera, soft policies (Meetings Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) industries, sport, culture and education); gas policies, and Arab Spring policies – will be the focus of analysis.

Assessing the underlying motives for this paradigm shift in Qatar's politics needs a structured approach. Gerd Nonneman's framework, which is specific to understanding foreign policy in the Middle East, categorises determinants of policy by their different levels: domestic, regional, and international. Backed up with a rigorous theoretical pedigree but one that is not beholden to any one perspective, Nonneman's framework offers a systematised way of analysing a state's foreign policies.

The domestic environment offers both perennial and changing factors that shape Qatar's policies as well as the resources that propelled them. The power of the ruling family is enduring and their personal proclivities are important in driving policy both historically and today. Just as Emir Khalifah Bin Hamad Al Thani's (r.1972-1995) personality disposed him to seek protection under Saudi Arabian auspices, the personality of his son – Emir Hamad Bin Khalifah Al Thani (r.1995-2013) – disposed him to find security anywhere but Saudi Arabia. Otherwise, Hamad Bin Khalifah pursued hitherto unimaginably progressive policies including modern ideas about education, social development, and international relations in his policies. These different ideas stemmed from not only his personality and those immediately around him, but were a product of a new age with new concerns. One such 'new' tool available to leaders was soft power, something that many new Qatari policies promoted.

Discernible throughout many of the identified 'new' policies is a domestically-focused dimension. Many of the softer policies improving Qatar's education sector as well as wider policies creating a positive image for Qatar are aimed at broadening sources of legitimacy for the elite and creating important symbols and material to embellish Qatar's national

identity. Many of these policies were expensive and were facilitated by Qatar's prodigious gas reserves, which made it the richest country in the world by various metrics. Qatar's domestic quietism, the result of intrinsic conservatism, the strong socioeconomic bargain, and trust in the leadership, gave the elite latitude particularly in foreign policy; a not insignificant facilitating factor by itself.

Qatar's region has been a source of instability and opportunity. The invasion of Kuwait offered a clear analogy for Qatar and demonstrated that black swan events do happen. In the Qatari case it is not Iraq that is the concern but Saudi Arabia. Indeed, the Janus-like relationship with Saudi Arabia can be seen as the handmaiden to a large segment of the new Qatari project. The roots of the issues in this relationship span the international arena with power rivalries, basic economic realities with gas opportunity-cost calculations, the personal level in terms of individual animus, rhetorical or ideational concerns with differing brands of Wahhabi Islam being showcased, and prosaic regional issues stemming from Qatar's courting of Iran. Indeed, this one example neatly highlights the folly of attempting to understand Qatar through a rigid theoretical approach that would prioritise any one level of analysis over another versus the benefits of Nonneman's framework with its multi-level approach.

This multitude of threats and concerns surrounding Saudi Arabia was a key impetus to securing not only America as an outside guarantor of Qatar's security but for altering Qatar's perspective from intra-regional to extra-regional. Via its gas policies, investments, and the extensive reach (and aim) of its soft power tools, a trend has been for Qatar to integrate itself into the economies and the consciousness of key countries around the world. Aside from economic security that is bolstered from such entanglements, Qatar's critical energy supplies to the UK, China, and Japan mean that their continued prosperity is near-inexorably tied into Qatar's continued prosperity. This places Qatar in a powerful position.

Qatar's significant exploits to augment its soft power capability are also driven by regional competition. Within a few hundred kilometres of Doha are three city-states (Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Manama) that are in direct competition for foreign direct investment (FDI), trade, and human resources. Various new policies can be seen as creating and propagating a

business-savvy, progressive brand for Qatar. This kind of soft power is critical in differentiating Qatar from these neighbouring states, something that is not necessarily so easy given their linguistic, economic, religious, societal, political, and geographical similarities.

Equally, Qatar's brand as a key font of its soft power is important internationally. The post-1995 elite in Qatar was operating in a quickly changing world. The end of the Cold War and the increasing haste of globalisation heralded a new era with new sets of challenges. While the internationalisation of commerce and communication allowed city-states like Qatar to increasingly involve itself in pan-global business and finance, this very act of committing its economic model to serve such internationalised aims undercuts state building efforts. Just one example of this is the vast population growth that Qatar has experienced as it seeks to grow its capital city into a city on the world stage as a finance, commerce, energy, and cultural hub. This has badly skewed Qatar's demographics and Qataris are outnumbered more than five to one. Such issues exacerbate on-going concerns with fostering national identity in Qatar; a relatively new state that was given independence only in 1971 and that has relatively few unique historical traits on which to differentiate itself from similar neighbours. Qatar's brand creates Doha as a place known for education as well as sporting and cultural events. Not only does this boost and propagate Doha's relative uniqueness giving it a 'unique selling point' externally, but this difference resonates internally and becomes one of the many factors folded into Qatar's evolving national identity.

Underlying many of these changes was a perennial Qatari policy made anew: seeking an external protector. Mindful of the invasion of Kuwait and subsequent decimation of the state, as Qatar was about to mortgage the country to invest in its LNG infrastructure in an era of deteriorating relations with Saudi Arabia, Qatar needed an American protection agreement. Initially rebuffed, Qatar augmented relations with Iran, Iraq, and Israel as a way to coax America along. America had been looking to enter the Gulf for years and took the chance. Agreements were signed in 1992 and Qatar's importance to America inexorably increased ever since. Just as with previous Qatari leaders, the protective agreement with an external guarantor has been the central plinth of Qatar's security. But new opportunities facilitated by burgeoning financial resources, a variety of international factors, and a savvy,

ambitious elite seeking to diversify Qatar's dependencies and remake its economy and polity propelled Qatar in entirely heretofore unseen directions.

The growing reach and confidence of Qatar can be seen in its actions in the Arab Spring. Contributing significantly to unseating regional leaders is something that Qatar has never done before. Similarly with its support of Muslim Brotherhood-backed elites never before has Qatar become so divisive on such a large scale: for every Brother who supports Qatar there is an opposition member who sees Qatar in a febrile region as aiding the enemy. Plunging Al Jazeera ratings are but one manifestation of this wide and growing concern with Qatar seen as a partisan actor in the region.

That Qatar has often relied on an external guarantor, which is presently the strongest military power in history, could also be an explanatory factor for why it took the risk of unseating a leader as mentally unhinged, as rich, and with as deadly a history in funding terrorist activities as Colonel Gaddafi in Libya. Snug in such pervasive protection, Qatar's leaders may have felt worryingly unencumbered by the ramifications of their actions. Thus far, aside from humiliating cyber-attacks, Qatar has emerged from its policies of ousting Colonel Gaddafi and attempting to oust Bashar Al Assad in Syria relatively unscathed. Yet Qatar's leadership needs to guard against automatically assuming that American guarantees are pervasive enough to protect Qatar from the consequences of its policies.

Moreover, arguably the most potent weapon that Qatar has developed is its soft power, which has been fostered and propagated by Al Jazeera, the world-class educational hub in Doha, its burgeoning cultural power, and its sporting prowess encapsulated in its successful bid to host the FIFA 2022 World Cup. In the 2000s Qatar was a largely inoffensive actor in regional politics, but not anymore. Indeed, it is not just within the Middle East that Qatar's brand is becoming tarnished with deep concern building in France as to the motives of recent Qatari ventures. Of particular concern was the example of Qatar seeking to invest in some of Paris' Muslim-dominated, dilapidated suburbs. Fears that Qatar has some nefarious religiously-inspired agenda are baseless, but this is another indication that Qatar's control of its image is getting out of control.

Qatar is a small state that is blessed with prodigious financial resources but is much less lucky in terms of the human capital at its disposal with such a small population that has only

benefitted from operating complex bureaucracies for a generation. It is difficult for a state like Qatar to conduct an ever more complicated set of foreign policies across the world from this intrinsically limited base. Qatar must prioritise its strengths. Al Jazeera, to take one aspect of its branding soft power, was a superbly effective, asymmetric use of financial resources to reach vast numbers of people with an intrinsically positive message about Qatar promoting dialogue. Such key fonts of soft power should be protected and nurtured, yet it is swiftly losing its importance in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. In the longer term, as Qatar's leaders readily acknowledge, Qatar cannot continue to lead the Middle East as it has been. It does not have the capacity or the clout to maintain this position and traditional leaders that have been unusually silent in recent years – Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iraq – will resume their traditional roles.

In the interim Qatar needs to be sure not to damage its unique attributes. While Egypt or Saudi Arabia's position in world politics is guaranteed by virtue of their large populations, military capacity, strategic location, and crucial historical and religious roles, Qatar has almost none of these intrinsic benefits. Its gas will be important for decades to come but, as the former Saudi Arabian Oil Minister Ahmed Zaki Yamani put it, the Stone Age did not end because it ran out of stone. Instead it is Qatar's soft power that is the asset that has the potential to be region and world-leading for generations. Egypt can afford its politics to be tarnished and Saudi Arabia can afford its international image to be deeply sullied for a decade, but both will bounce back by virtue of their indispensability to the Middle East and international relations more generally. The same is not so for Qatar and it cannot afford for its fonts of soft power to be degraded for there is no guarantee that they can be rehabilitated; crucially, the Middle East could function without Qatar at its centre.

## Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 1 will summarise the available literature on Qatar and highlight the place of this thesis within it.

Chapter 2 outlines the approach to this study of Qatar and its foreign policies. This section includes an examination of the appropriate methodological issues as well as an examination of theoretical frameworks. Gerd Nonneman's approach will be highlighted as one of several possibilities, but one that is best suited to the Qatar case study because of its flexibility and direct relevance stemming from a rigorously theoretical but also Middle East-focused background.

Chapter 3 focuses on Qatar's modern history from the late 18$^{th}$ century in order to understand the modern-day foreign policies in their historical context. This kind of approach clearly outlines how novel and unusual several of the newer foreign policies were compared to their antecedents. Equally this chapter allows conclusions to be drawn as to perennial tropes that remain embedded in Qatar's foreign policies.

Chapter 4 is the central analytical section. It begins by summarising the main policy differences between what may be described as the historically typical Qatari policy versus the 'new' policies as overseen by Hamad Bin Khalifah Al Thani. In some cases these policies are entirely new and have no meaningful comparison, such as Qatar's founding of the satellite channel Al Jazeera, and in some cases the chapter focuses on explaining the latest iteration of policies that have occurred before, such as with American security guarantees. In total seven policies have been identified as either new in substance or entirely new.

Chapter 5 concludes the thesis and highlights traditional motivating factors as well as the new concerns that have contributed to driving a new wave of Qatari foreign policy.

# Chapter 1: Literature Review

It is both a blessing and a curse that the literature on Qatar is so sparse. While this offers a researcher space to publish and a broad range of topics to focus on, the lack of a rigorous, existing architecture of knowledge on Qatar can leave a researcher isolated, obliging the use of a wider range of corroborating sources and alternative methods.

The focus of this thesis is on aspects of modern Qatari policies; specifically, it discerns why Qatar's elite has engaged in a raft of striking policies starting in the late-1980s. These policies can only be understood if they are suitably contextualised against both their antecedents and the evolution of Qatar's history.

## The historical context

A researcher focusing on Qatar must, for the majority of the time, be content with searching for sections referring to Qatar in books focussing on nearby topics. While this can be frustrating and can lead to a lack of detail at times, it is also useful as it firmly places Qatar and its growth in the local and regional context, an important factor given the porous borders and roaming tribes in the seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries.

Abu Hakima's excellent *History of Eastern Arabia, 1750-1800 : The Rise and Development of Bahrain and Kuwait* is something of a classic, as one might expect from someone who met extensively with Cornelius James Pelly, studied under Bernard Lewis, and was recommended by Albert Hourani. His accessible work, along with his other book specifically focussed on Kuwait, offers the best background on the machinations affecting the Eastern half of the Arabian Peninsula from the mid-18$^{th}$ century onwards.[8] Al Rashid offers a similarly useful perspective on the eastern half of Arabia though with more of a focus on nascent Saudi Arabia and its relations with the Qatari peninsula.[9] In a time when records were sparse and there is often confusion as to which tribe went where, when and did what to whom, these two sources are as reliable as they come and act as a baseline. Various other authors such as

[8] Ahmad Mustafa Abu Hakima, *History of Eastern Arabia, 1750-1800 : The Rise and Development of Bahrain and Kuwait*, 1st ed. (Beirut: Khayats, 1965). *The Modern History of Kuwait, 1750-1965* (London: Luzac, 1983).
[9] Zamil Muhammad Al-Rashid, *Saudi Relations with Eastern Arabia and Oman, 1800-1870* (London Luzac, 1981).

J.B. Kelly, whose voluminous contributions eloquently span the region, add further depth and narrative.[10]

Specifically focused on Qatar, Rahman's *The Emergence of Qatar* offers the most thorough coverage of Qatar in the 17th and 18th centuries.[11] Though at times Rahman draws conclusions that are not wholly backed up with evidence, he nevertheless acts as a good aggregator of sources relating to Qatar.

The Ottomans were a feature of life on the Arabian Peninsula for four centuries from 1517 onwards. There are many interesting and useful works which tangentially refer to life in eastern Arabia or which are otherwise relevant.[12] Regarding Qatar specifically, by far the best author on this topic is Fred Anscombe, who has written at length about Qatar and its environs.[13] Moreover, Anscombe's work is useful and refreshing as he does not focus exclusively on British sources but instead he has, at some length, trawled the Ottoman archives in Istanbul and Sofia. His exposition of Qatar's history is thus more nuanced and takes into account the important effects that nearly fifty years of Ottoman boots on the ground had on nascent Qatar. His book *The Ottoman Gulf*, for example, is mandatory reading for anyone interested in Qatar's history at this time. Zekeriya Kursun's short work on Qatar and the Ottomans is interesting if clearly biased towards augmenting the Ottoman importance in Qatar. Still, his extensive research in the Ottoman archives provides further

[10] J. B. Kelly, *Eastern Arabian Frontiers* (London: Frederick A Praeger, 1964).
"Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States," in *Critical Choices for Americans* (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1976).
*Britain and the Persian Gulf* ([S.l.]: Clarendon, 1968).

[11] Habibur Rahman, *The Emergence of Qatar* (London: Keegan Paul Ltd., 2005).

[12] L. Carl Brown, ed. *Imperial Legacy : The Ottoman Imprint on the Balkans and the Middle East* (New York ; Chichester: Columbia University Press, 1996).
A. C. S. Peacock, *The Frontiers of the Ottoman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
Giancarlo Casale, "The Ottoman Administration of the Spice Trade in the Sixteenth-Century Red Sea and Persian Gulf," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 49(2006).

[13] Frederick F. Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf : The Creation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar* (New York ; Chichester: Columbia University Press, 1997).
"An Anational Society: Eastern Arabia in the Ottoman Period," in *Transnational Connections and the Arab Gulf*, ed. Madawi Al-Rasheed (New York ; London: Routledge, 2005).
"The Ottoman Role in the Gulf," in *The Persian Gulf in History*, ed. Lawrence G. Potter (New York ; Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).
"Continuities in Ottoman Centre-Periphery Relations, 1787-1915," in *The Frontiers of the Ottoman World*, ed. A. C. S. Peacock (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

interesting snippets of life under the Ottomans, which, when taken into account with a knowledge of the time period, proves to be useful. [14]

There is no shortage of primary evidence dealing with the British influence on the Gulf. The *Bombay Selections* are one of the most oft-used sources. They are a voluminous "collection of reports received by the government of Bombay...designed to serve as a reference book for officers working in the area."[15] These varied intelligence reports, often focusing on the tribes and treaties of the region, act as the basis of many subsequent diaries, gazetteers and reports.[16] They are the work of extensive primary research by the British agents at the time. Often there was no systematised or formal record keeping capacity, which means these reports are the primary source of first-hand information on this area.

British correspondence to and from the region amounts to tens of thousands of documents, is readily accessible at the British Library and at Kew National Archives, and provides an outstanding source for historians.[17] Additionally there are several *précis* of the British archives and other archives focusing on or with significant reference to Qatar: *The Records of Qatar*, edited by Penelope Tuson and Anita Burdette; *The GCC States: National Development Records: Defence 1920-1960* also edited by Anita Burdette; *Arabian Gulf Oil Concessions* has several volumes focussing on Qatar;[18] The *Persian Gulf Précis* edited by J.A. Saldanha; *GCC National Development Records: Communications and Transport 1860-1960* edited by Anita Burdette; *Ruling Families of Arabia: Qatar* by Alan de Lacy Rush; and *Arabian Boundaries* edited by Richard Schofield.[19] Lastly, there is also a compilation of British records

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[14] Zekeriya. Kursun, *The Ottomans in Qatar : A History of Anglo-Ottoman Conflicts in the Persian Gulf* Studies on Ottoman Diplomatic History (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2002).

[15] Robin Bidwell, "Introduction," in *Arabian Gulf Intelligence - Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government*, ed. R Hughes Thomas (Cambridge: The Oleander Press, 1985).

[16] William Gifford Palgrave, *Narrative of a Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia (1862-1863)*, 2 vols., vol. Volume 2 (Farnborough: Gregg, 1865 (1969)).
Francis Warden, "Historical Sketch of the Uttoobee Tribe of Arabs (Bahrein) from the Year 1716 to the Year 1817," in *Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government* (Bombay; London1856).
John Gordon Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, vol. Volume 1, Part 1 (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, India, 1915).

[17] It is interesting to note that under a Qatari led initiative, many of these records will soon be digitised.

[18] *Arabian Gulf Oil Concessions*. VII vols., vol. I, II, III, Archive Editions (Oxford: Archive Editions, 1989).

[19] Penelope Tuson, *Records of Qatar : Primary Documents 1820-1960* (Slough: Archive Editions, 1991).
Anita L.P. Burdett, ed. *Records of Qatar 1961-1965* (Slough, U.K.: Archive Editions Limited, 1997).
*The GCC States: National Development Records: Defence 1920-1960*, vol. Volume 6 (Chippenham: Archive Editions, 1994).
Ibid., Volume 2.

pertaining to Doha as a city, which contains prosaic but essential information regarding, for example, urban development and education.[20]

These précis are expertly distilled correspondence pertaining to a specific topic area of the numerous British Imperial sources. They are more manageable than the raw documents themselves though still run into thousands of pages. A combination approach using both the original sources and the précis was used for this thesis.

Given the importance Britain played in the Gulf for much of Qatar's existence, these documents often include correspondence from the leaders themselves. While clearly the majority of these sources are written from the British Imperial perspective and the conversations in question take place under the auspices of securing, guarding, and augmenting British power, they are nevertheless invaluable for researchers. On this point in particular as with the rest of this historical background, it is simply a matter of triangulation with other sources. When this is not available as is sometimes the case, the fact that the motives of the British are quite transparent means that the sources can be readily understood and used with the researcher keeping any bias in mind. Indeed, sometimes it is not even necessarily what these documents say, but where they are from. For example, the fact that increasingly communications between London and Emir Ahmed (r.1960-1972) are routed through Geneva in the 1960s tells its own story.

The records are heavy on detail almost to a fault. They can be cumbersome and time-consuming to wade through but a combination of the accuracy, the scope, and the relevance of the material makes these archives essential for any detailed study of Qatar or the other Gulf States.

There are a range of articles to which this thesis will contribute using the British sources (and others) to analyse and attempt to understand better the Gulf States during the

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Alan de Lacy Rush, ed. *Ruling Families of Arabia: Qatar* (Melksham, UK: Archive Editions, 1991).
J.A. Saldanha, *Precis of Katar Affairs 1873-1904*, VIII vols., vol. IV, Persian Gulf Gazetteer (London & Calcutta: Archive Editions, 1904 (reprinted 1986)).
*Precis of Bahrein Affairs 1854-1904*, vol. Vol. IV, Persian Gulf Gazetteer (London & Calcutta: Archive Editions, 1904 (reprinted 1986)).
Anita L. P. Burdett, ed. *The GCC States: National Development Records: Communications and Transport*, vol. I - Bahrain & Qatar, Archive Editions (Oxford: Archive Editions, 1996).
[20] Richard Trench, ed. *Arab Gulf Cities*ibid. (Antont Rowe Ltd., 1994).

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Authors whose works reoccur often such is their depth of focus on the Gulf are James Onley, John Peterson, and Jill Crystal.[21]

While some particular aspects of Qatar are dealt with in surprising detail over a number of articles, such as its geographical composition, the dearth of analysis of Qatar overall is disappointing.[22]

The historical emergent bi-lateral relationship between Qatar and its modern-day GCC neighbours is dealt with sparingly in various texts. Donald Hawley's work on *The Trucial States*, for example, while providing a detailed if at times dry overview from first-hand experience and diplomatic sources scarcely mentions Qatar despite its proximity, its ties, and interrelations with the Trucial States.[23]

As more books emerged on the Gulf States – particularly focusing on Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Oman – so too there is more opportunity to gather snippets on Qatar's bi-lateral relations or on a specific topic.

Andrea Rugh's focus on the history of the Emirates and the emergent political culture of leadership has frequent passing reference to Qatar.[24] Christopher Davidson's three seminal works on the Emirates contain between them numerous substantive references to Qatar and the emerging relationships between the statelets.[25] Additionally, Ali Khalifah's work on the Emirates also contributes, particularly regarding the period 1968-1971.[26]

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[21] James Onley, "Britain's Native Agents in Arabia and Persia in the Nineteenth Century," *Comparative Studies of South Asia Africa and the Middle East* 24, no. 1 (2004).
"Britain's Informal Empire in the Gulf 1820-1971," *Journal of Social Affairs* 22, no. 87 (Fall 2005 ).
James E. Onley, "The Politics of Protection in the Gulf: The Arab Rulers and the British Resident in the Nineteenth Century," in *New Arabian Studies*, ed. Pridham B, Smart J, and G Rex Smith (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2004).
J. E. Peterson, "Tribes and Politics in Eastern Arabia," *Middle East Journal* 31, no. 3 - Summer (1977).
Jill Crystal, "Eastern Arabian States: Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, U.A.E., and Oman," in *The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa*, ed. David E. Long, Bernard Reich, and Mark Gasiorowski (Boulder: CO: Westview Press, 2007).
[22] Alexander Melamid, "Political Geography of Trucial 'Oman and Qatar," *Geographical Review* 43, no. 2 (1953).
T. M. Johnstone and John C. Wilkinson, "Some Geographical Aspects of Qatar," *The Geographical Journal* 126, no. 4 (1960 December).
[23] Donald Hawley, *The Trucial States* (New York: Twayne Publishers Inc., 1970).
[24] Andrea B Rugh, *The Political Culture of Leadership in the United Arab Emirates* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
[25] Christopher Davidson, *Dubai : The Vulnerability of Success* (London: Hurst and Company, 2008).
*The United Arab Emirates : A Study in Survival* (Boulder, CO.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005).

Jacob Goldberg's superb study of Saudi Arabia's foreign policy provides, from the earliest days until 1918, an excellent and illuminating commentary on Saudi-Qatari relations.[27] William B Quandt's authoritative study of Saudi Arabia's foreign policy and security in the 1980s makes a passing but crucial reference to Qatar:

> Qatar, as the only other political entity that shares Saudi Arabia's adherence to the strict Wahhabi interpretation of Islam, is somewhat more securely anchored to the Saudi sphere of influence than the other gulf states and therefore is taken more for granted. Periodic visits take place, but Qatar is not a major actor in any of the arenas that interest the Saudis.[28]

This neat encapsulation of the Saudi-Qatari relationship and the fundamental understanding of the relative importance to each other is a crucial explanatory factor of the increasingly poor bilateral relationship as the 1990s progress.

Similarly, Jawad Al Arayed's plotted history of the undulating Qatar-Bahrain relationship, though written from an unabashedly pro-Bahraini standpoint, is still useful when used in context with these other sources.[29] Furthermore, in addition to the primary evidence relating to the boundary dispute there are also various other sources discussing this event including a thorough legal summary by Barbara Kwiatkowska.[30]

Qatar's important and interesting relationship with Iran is poorly covered; an area where sections of this thesis will add particular depth and analysis. Christin Marschall's book on the topic is a pleasant anomaly in this respect, offering an in-depth look at this topic.[31] Other works on Iran and the Gulf – and specifically Talat Parveen's *Iran's Policy Towards the Gulf* – do not offer enough critical rigour and is more of a narrative than a scholarly account,[32]

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*Abu Dhabi: Oil and Beyond* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

[26] Ali Mohammed Khalifa, *The United Arab Emirates: Unity in Fragmentation* (Boulder: CO: Westview Press, 1979).

[27] Jacob Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia : The Formative Years, 1902-1918*, Harvard Middle Eastern Studies (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1986).

[28] William B Quandt, *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s: Foreign Policy, Security and Oil* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution 1981), p.25.

[29] Jawad Salim Al Arayed, *A Line in the Sea : The Qatar Versus Bahrain Border Dispute in the World Court* (Berkeley, California: North Atlantic, 2003).

[30] Barbara Kwiatkowska, *The Qatar V Bahrain Maritime Delimitation and the Territorial Questions Case*, Bwp the Law of the Sea Series Iii (Bosch: Book World Publishers, 2002).

[31] Christin Marschall, *Iran's Persian Gulf Policy : From Khomeini to Khatami* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

[32] Talat Parveen, *Iran's Policy Towards the Gulf* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 2006).

while others focusing on Iran's foreign policy simply barely mention Qatar.[33] Studies by Kamran Taremi focusing specifically on Iran's water exporting policies and Ramazani's work on Iran's foreign policy orientation are critical in filling these gaps.[34]

Despite sporadic lacunae in the available literature on Qatar, overall, there is a critical mass that, in conjunction with other courses (notably the aforementioned précis), offer a researcher the ability to triangulate quite accurately key aspects of Qatar's history.

With the arrival of oil comes another set of resources which tangentially discuss Qatar.[35] After oil is struck in Qatar in the 1930s, more of a focus is applied but still not with the rigour that Iraq or Bahrain are discussed: Qatar is simply peripheral and it remains so for the majority of the twentieth century. There is some discussion of the effects of oil on Qatar as this was a trope of Gulf Studies for a time, chronicling and analysing the vast changes in lifestyles on the post-oil Arabian Peninsula. This thesis will draw sporadically on this literature and will contribute only tangentially to such a specific focus.[36] However, if one is to broaden out these discussions to a different iteration of the post oil and gas effects – which is essentially the essence of this thesis – then this thesis aspires to make a major contribution to this sub-field.

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[33] Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri, eds., *Iran's Foreign Policy: From Khatami to Ahmadinejad* (Reading: Ithaca Press, 2008).
Shireen Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy in the Post Soviety Era* (Santa Barbara: CA: Praeger, 2010).
[34] Kamran Taremi, "The Role of Water Exports in Iranian Foreign Policy Towards the GCC," *Iranian Studies* 28, no. 2 (June 2005).
R K Ramazani, "Iran's Foreign Policy: Both North and South," *The Middle East Journal* 46, no. 3 (Summer 1992).
[35] Zuhayr Mikdashi, *A Financial Analysis of Middle Eastern Oil Concessions: 1901-1965* (New York: Praeger, 1966).
Stephen Hemsley Longrigg, "Oil in the Middle East ... Second Edition. [with Maps.]," (pp. xiii. 401. Oxford University Press: London, 1961).
Henry Cattan, *The Evolution of Oil Concessions in the Middle East and North Africa* (Dobbs Ferry: Oceana, 1967).
Benjamin Shwadran, *The Middle East : Oil and the Great Powers*, 3rd ed. ed. (Jerusalem: J. Wiley/Israel Univsity Press, 1973).
Charles W Hamilton, *Americans and Oil in the Middle East* (Houston, Tex.: Gulf Pub. Co., 1962).
Sir Olaf Caroe, *Wells of Power : The Oilfields of South-Western Asia; a Regional and Global Study* (Macmillan, 1951).
[36] Levon H Melikian and Juhaina S Al-Easa, "Oil and Social Change in the Gulf," *Journal of Arab Affairs* 1, no. 1 (1981 October).
Monika Fatima Muhlbock, "The Social and Political Change in Qatar under Khalifah N. Hamad Al Thani (1972-1995)," *Hemispheres*, no. 14 (1999).
Zuhair Ahmed Nafi, *Economic and Social Development in Qatar* (London: Frances Pinter, 1983).
Rupert Sir Hay, "The Impact of the Oil Industry on the Persian Gulf Shaikhdoms," *The Middle East Journal* 9, no. 4 (Autumn 1955).

Still, Qatar is often mentioned in various 'classics' focusing on the region. John Duke Anthony's *Arab States of the Lower Gulf* is particularly useful as it devotes a (small) chapter to Qatar.[37] Though general, it is written by a scholar steeped in the region's history and politics and is thus more useful than one might expect. Muhammad Sadik and William Snavely's *Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates* is moderately useful too, providing a good, rounded history of Qatar and its micro-region up until independence.[38] Works by Gregory Gause are, as ever, of the highest quality and situate Qatar superbly in its regional and temporal contexts.[39] Specifically, Gause's *Oil Monarchies* is important in linking the international level – primarily relations with America – to the domestic level including, as the title alludes, analysing the central role of the hydrocarbon-based economies of the Gulf States and its impact on the basic ruling bargain.

Complementing these works are various other books that, while specifically focussing on Qatar, need the previously mentioned works for context. Ragaei El Mallakh's two books on Qatar focusing on its development are statistically-based at the expense of actually explaining what is going on and, crucially, why things are happening: overall, they lack perspective.[40] Still, if one wants to know the number of schools in Doha in 1960, El Mallekh is the first port of call.

A few works by regional academics some of whom focus on Qatar specifically emerged in the 1970s and 1980s. Typically these either focused too heavily on statistics, with a commensurate lack of meaningful explanation or were little more than narratives. Either way, often lacking critical discussions and always lacking rigour, they can perhaps add a flavour of life in Qatar but are not of serious academic merit.[41]

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[37] John Duke Anthony, *Arab States of the Lower Gulf: People, Politics, Petroleum* (Washington DC: Capital City Press, 1975).

[38] Muhammad T. Sadiq and William P. Snavely, *Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates : Colonial Past, Present Problems, and Future Prospects* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1972).

[39] Gregory Gause III, *Oil Monarchies* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1994).
*The International Relations of the Persian Gulf* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[40] Ragaei El Mallakh, *Qatar : Energy & Development* (London ; Dover, N.H: Croom Helm, 1985).
*Qatar : Development of an Oil Economy* (London: Croom Helm, 1979).

[41] I. Abu Nab, *Qatar: A Story of State Building* (1977).
Muhammad Uthman, *With Their Bare Hands : The Story of the Oil Industry in Qatar* (London: Longman, 1984).

It is at this point that arguably the two best works on Qatar become particularly useful. Rosemarie Said Zahlan's *The Making of Qatar* and Jill Crystal's *Oil and Politics in the Gulf: Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar* provide researchers with a superb overview and a structured understanding of Qatar in the twentieth century.[42] Crystal's work on Qatar expertly outlines her conception of the basic ruling dynamic in Qatar: the ruler-merchant nexus, which is usefully juxtaposed against the dynamic in Kuwait. Crystal compellingly argues that the reason Kuwait is today so rambunctious politically is because of the close and symbiotic relationship between the rulers and the merchant class. Both grew simultaneously and the rulers relied on the merchants occasionally for support and vice versa. This is in stark contrast to Qatar where no merchant elite emerged in anything like the Kuwait model: it was never as strong. Aside from the occasional merchant who captured a specific market, there was no class of merchants that stood up to the ruling family. This dynamic of dominance of the Al Thani family has deep ramifications to this day, Crystal cogently argues, and helps to explain the quiet ruling dynamic and the lack of vociferous domestic agitation. Zahlan's work is more of a general *tour de force* of Qatar, eloquently delineating the history of the state and is crucial as a sound of insight.

Overall, it is difficult to overestimate the importance of these two books to the field of Qatar studies. Without these books, there would be no overarching studies longitudinally focusing on Qatar. These immensely readable works are required reading for students of Qatari history and modern politics.

Yet there remains, from the 1980s to end of the century, a relative lacuna in rigorous and reliable literature on Qatar. Zahlan's work was published in 1979 and Crystal's, though updated in 1995, is exceedingly brief on this later time period. This dearth of information stems primarily from two factors.

Firstly, since independence in 1971, Qatar's leaders explicitly eschewed the limelight, preferring to quietly live demonstrably under the shadow, auspices, and lead of Saudi Arabia following a well-trodden Qatari path. Without an identifiable 'Qatari policy' to follow, this

[42] Rosemarie Said Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar* (London, New York: Croom Helm 1979).
Jill Crystal, *Oil and Politics in the Gulf : Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

meant that there was typically always some other more interesting story somewhere in the region. Secondly, the 1980s were a time of profound change in the Gulf. The aftermath of the Iranian Revolution, of the siege of Mecca, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan all occurred in 1979. These momentous events and their consequences, not least of which was the deadly Iran-Iraq war, captured attention. Little Qatar, going out of its way not to be recognised, understandably avoided the gaze of the majority of authors and academics at that time.

The researcher must therefore be inventive. For example, laboriously scouring library resources reveals the archives of the Middle East Economic Digest, which go back as far as the early 1970s. These provide snippets of important comings and goings in Qatar. Yet again, this source suffers from Qatar's overt desire to avoid the limelight, hence several months can go by with no real mention of events in Qatar, but it is nevertheless a sporadically useful source. After independence there are also 'special issues' which focus on Qatar.[43] Granted, the prose is neither critical nor overly enlightening being aimed at those with little knowledge of Qatar, but if one wants to know how much aid Qatar gave Egypt or when the Sudanese Embassy opened, it is a good source.

Other unusual, sparsely used but exceedingly useful sources can be found in the National Archives in Kew, London. Here are the Ambassadorial despatches of outgoing British Ambassadors, their final thoughts on the country, and their annual reports. Though there are not many archived yet, the ones that are there from the 1970s are excellent. Interesting and engagingly written, they offer an unvarnished glimpse of life in Qatar, often at high levels given the enduring importance of the British Ambassador in Doha. Moreover, the authors – the Ambassadors themselves – are seasoned diplomats and regional experts. By virtue of their experience, access, and knowledge, they can have an unerring ability to pierce the fog of assumptions and guess work that can plague the study of the smaller Gulf States in the absence of reliable and official reportage.

In addition to perusing the archives the British Freedom of Information Act was used to procure Valedictory Despatches from five British Ambassadors who left in 1981, 1987, 1989,

[43] The first special edition was published in 1969, in the run up to independence "Meed Special: Qatar," *Middle East Economic Digest* (October 1969).

1993 and 2008. Though these documents have redactions, these are exceedingly useful sources.[44]

Arguably of yet more use are the annual assessments of British Ambassadors in Doha. Kew hosts these reports from the late 1970s and subsequently, as with the Valedictory Despatches, the reports from 1981 to 2004 were procured from the FCO via the Freedom of Information Act.[45] Some documents may be held back should their release potentially

[44] Graham Boyce, "Qatar: Valedectory Despatch," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 8th August 1993).
Colin Brant, "Valedictory from Qatar: A Land of Promise," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 9th July 1981).
Julian Walker, "Qatar: Valedictory," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 24th May 1987).
Patrick Nixon, "Qatar: Valedictory Annual Review for 1989," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 22nd January 1990).
David McLennan, "Qatar: Impressions of a Year in Doha (Valedictory) ", ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 6th August 2008).

[45] Stephen Day, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1981," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 4th January 1982).
"Qatar: Annual Review for 1982," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 5th February 1983).
"Qatar: Annual Review for 1983," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 13th March 1984).
Julian Walker, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1984," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 13th March 1984).
"Qatar: Annual Review for 1985," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 11th January 1986).
"Qatar: Annual Review for 1986," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 4th January 1987).
Patrick Nixon, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1987," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 30th December 1988).
"Qatar: Annual Review for 1988," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 31st December 1988).
"Qatar: Valedictory Annual Review for 1989."
Graham Boyce, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1990," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 7th January 1991).
"Qatar: Annual Review for 1991," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 7th January 1992).
Patrick Wogan, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1993," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 12th January 1994).
"Qatar: Annual Review for 1994," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 4th January 1995).
"Qatar: Annual Review for 1995," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 3rd January 1996).
"Qatar: Annual Review for 1996," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 7th January 1997).
David Wright, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1997," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO).
"Qatar: Annual Review for 1998," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO).

damage British interests and there are also at times swathes of redactions in the documents. Yet this never before accessed plethora of intelligent, expert, and relevant primary data is a treasure-trove for the Qatar researcher.

It is not only the privileged and expert authors that make them so useful, but the fact that they are – prosaically – simply keeping a record of key observations throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Indeed, Qatar studies suffer from a profound lack of solid information in the 1980s. Heavy use is therefore made of these documents shining a light on this time in which it is difficult to come by other information.

Of course, one must always be aware that these documents are not impartial. The British Ambassador writes from the perspective of someone looking to secure and extend British influence and interests in Qatar. Yet as long as this basic caveat is understood, these prove to be exceedingly useful sources.

A range of generalist books focusing on the Gulf region emerged in the 1990s and 2000s. Some focussed across a variety of topics and countries. These books, while useful at providing an overview, can lack detail.[46] However, there are notable exceptions. Sean Foley's *The Arab Gulf States: Beyond Oil and Islam*, managed to, within the remit of the thrust of the book – the evolution of the Gulf States – contain some almost unique sections discussing, for example, the emergence of the Christian Churches in Qatar.[47] Each one plugged a hole or two of information that together provide a useful and mostly complete picture of Qatar.

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"Qatar: Annual Review for 1999," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO).
"Qatar: Annual Review for 2000," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO).
"Qatar: Annual Review for 2001," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO).
David McLennan, "Qatar: Annual Review for 2002," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 16th October 2003).
"Qatar: Annual Review for 2003," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 20th December 2004).

[46] Anthony Toth, "Qatar," in *Persian Gulf States: Country Studies*, ed. Helen Chapin Metz (Washington DC: U.S. Government Priniting Office, 1994).
Edmund O'Sullivan, *The New Gulf* (Ajman: Motivate Publishing, 2008).

[47] Sean Foley, *The Arab Gulf States: Beyond Oil and Islam* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2010).

The topic of security was expertly analysed by Anthony Cordesman in various works, often in depth and by, for example, Robert Litwak.[48] Joseph Kechichian provided an excellent overview of Monarchies across the Arab world in 2008 and Michael Herb has written eloquently on the topic too.[49] Indeed, his 1999 book *All in the Family* is something of a modern-day classic.[50] Herb branched out and looked at questions of participation in Qatar and elsewhere in the region and specifically attacked the simplistic understanding of the region through the lens of rentierism. While this concept is not to be ejected entirely, Herb argues, it is important to examine more specifically the nature of monarchical rule in the region and the overbearing importance of the ruling families themselves. This concept is, it could be argued, particularly important to Qatar given Crystal's conclusions about the domineering nature of the Al Thani family. Other works on this broad topic include edited books on governance in the Middle East, the question of political change and a notably authoritative work in French on monarchies and societies in the Gulf.[51]

In terms of articles, even to this day, there are but a handful dealing specifically with Qatar. Still, these few are useful when looking at Qatar's foreign relations,[52] its internal politics,[53] its

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[48] Anthony H. Cordesman and Khalid Al Rodhan, "The Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric War," (Washintgon D.C.: Center for Strategic International Studies, 28th June 2006).
Anthony H. Cordesman, *Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and the UAE : Challenges of Security*, Csis Middle East Dynamic Net Assessment. (Boulder, Colo. ; Oxford: Westview, 1997).
Anthony H. Cordesman and Khalid Al Rodhan, "The Middle East Military Balance: Definition, Regional Developments and Trends," (Washington D.C. : Center for International Strategic Studies, March 2005).
Robert Litwak, *Sources of Inter-State Conflict*, Security in the Persian Gulf (Montclair; NJ: Allanheld, Osmun & Co. , 1981).

[49] Michael Herb, "A Nation of Bureaucrats: Political Participation and Economic Diversification in Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates " *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 41, no. 03 (2009).
"No Representation without Taxation? Rents, Development, and Democracy," *Comparative Politics* 37, no. 3 (2005).
"Emirs and Parliaments in the Gulf," *Journal of Democracy* Vol.13, no. No.4 (October 2002).

[50] *All in the Family* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1999).

[51] Tom Pierre Najem and Martin Hetherington, eds., *Good Governance in the Middle East Oil Monarchies*, Durham Modern Middle East and Islamic World Series (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003).
Mary Ann Tetreault, Gwenn Okruhlik, and Andrzej Kapiszewski, eds., *Political Change in the Arab Gulf States: Stuck in Transition* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2011).
John Peterson and Markaz al-Khal*ij lil-Ab.h*ath., *The Arab Gulf States : Further Steps Towards Political Participation*, Gulf Papers (Gulf Research Center) (Dubai: Gulf Research Center, 2006).
Fatiha Dazi-Heni, *Monarchies Et Societes D'arabie* (Paris: Presses de la Fondation Nationale Des Sciences Politiques, 2006).

[52] J. E. Peterson, "Qatar and the World: Branding for a Micro-State," *The Middle East Journal* 60(2006).
Jacob Abadi, "Qatar's Foreign Policy: The Quest for National Security and Territorial Integrity," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* XXVII, no. No.2, Winter 2004 (2004).
Mehran Kamrava, "Mediation and Qatari Foreign Policy," *Middle East Journal* 65, no. 4 (Autumn 2011).

domestic reforms,[54] and its gas policies.[55] By its very nature this thesis will act as an aggregation of the state of the art to date and add another layer of in-depth analysis of these exact factors, placing them in their historical and modern-day contexts.

JE Peterson's article is of particular importance to this thesis. This neatly describes the importance of reputation to a country like Qatar; about how fostering a reputation as x or y – i.e. developing Qatar's 'brand' and soft power – is not an afterthought but key to understanding Qatar's modern dynamism.

Indeed, the branding literature more generally is of use when framing some of the key theories used in the thesis. Peter Van Ham wrote a seminal piece in *Foreign Affairs* in 2001, in many ways starting the serious study of country brand management.[56] Subsequently, there has been some excellent work done, particularly in the *Journal of Brand Management*. A special focus on country branding in a 2002 issue provided interesting case study examples.[57]

Since the Millennium there have been a couple of books published on Qatar. Unfortunately, the two which look the most promising, Michael Gray's *Qatar: Politics and the Challenges of* Development and Mehran Kamrava's *Qatar: Small State, Big* Politics were printed too late for inclusion to this thesis. Allen Fromherz's 2012 *Qatar: A Modern History*, which offered a decent overview of Qatar, is ultimately not a suitable academic source. The book is riddled with factual

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[53] "Royal Factionalism and Political Liberalization in Qatar," *Middle East Journal* Vol. 62, no. No. 3 (Summer 2009).

[54] Andrew Rathmell and Kirsten Schulze, "Political Reform in the Gulf: The Case of Qatar," *Middle Eastern Studies* 36, no. 4 (2000).
Peterson and Markaz al-Khal*ij lil-Ab.h*ath., *The Arab Gulf States : Further Steps Towards Political Participation*.

[55] Justin Dargin, "Qatar's Natural Gas: The Foreign-Policy Driver," *Middle East Policy* 14, no. 3 (2007).
Kohei Hashimoto, Jareer Elass, and Stacy Eller, "Liquified Natural Gas from Qatar: The Qatargas Project," in *Geopolitics of Gas Working Paper Series* (Stanford: Baker Institute Energy Forum, Rice University, December 2004).

[56] Peter Van Ham, "The Rise of the Brand State: The Postmodern Politics of Image and Reputation," *Foreign Affairs* September-October 2001

[57] Fiona Gilmore, "A Country Can It Be Repositioned? Spain - the Success Story of Country Branding," *Brand Management* 9, no. 4-5 (2002).
Stjepo Martinovic, "Branding Hrvatska a Mixed Blessing That Might Succeed: The Advantage of Being Unrecognisable," ibid.

errors, the chapter order makes no discernible sense indicating the book was rushed or at least poorly thought-through, and topics are glossed over quickly with no real depth of analysis.[58]

The story of Qatar's exploitation of its oil and most notably its gas resources is of central importance. In the early days the focus is generally on Iraq, Iran, and Bahrain. Yet Qatar's concessions are not trivial and there are useful chapters to be read.[59] Their evolution is traced sporadically by the afore mentioned Mallakh's books, others looking at the industry as a whole, and by the seminal works of Gause, Crystal, and Zahlan.[60] The various British records also provide the context for the oil-dependent development decisions as well as a highly detailed record of the early transactions, as mentioned earlier.

Understanding Qatar as an oil power and the types of development that it allowed is important but is most useful when compared and contrasted with Qatar's emergence from the early 1990s as a gas giant. As the 1980s progressed and the oil price dipped leading to some of Qatar's first ever budget deficits, so the imperative to utilise their gas deposits increased. This topic, like most with Qatar particularly in the 1980s, suffers from a significant lack of research. However, there is one source in particular which is invaluable. Rice University commissioned a series of studies on Liquefied Natural Gas producers and markets around the world in December 2004. Three researchers focussed on Qatar to provide a

[58] Allen Fromherz, *Qatar: A Modern History* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2011).
Matthew Gray, *Qatar : Politics and the Challenges of Development* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2013).
Mehran Kamrava, *Qatar: Small State, Big Politics* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2013).
[59] Longrigg, "Oil in the Middle East ... Second Edition. [with Maps.]."
Caroe, *Wells of Power : The Oilfields of South-Western Asia; a Regional and Global Study*.
Hay Rupert, "The Impact of the Oil Industry on the Persian Gulf Shaykhdoms," *The Middle East Journal* 9, no. 4 (Autumn1955 ).
Hamilton, *Americans and Oil in the Middle East*.
Cattan, *The Evolution of Oil Concessions in the Middle East and North Africa*.
Shwadran, *The Middle East : Oil and the Great Powers*.
Mikdashi, *A Financial Analysis of Middle Eastern Oil Concessions: 1901-1965*.
[60] Ali Khalifah Al Kuwari, *Oil Revenues in the Gulf Emirates : Patterns of Allocation and Impact on Economic Development*, ed. John C Dewdney (Epping: Bowker Publishing Co. LTD, 1978).
El Mallakh, *Qatar : Development of an Oil Economy*.
Gause III, *Oil Monarchies*.
Crystal, *Oil and Politics in the Gulf : Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar*.
Rosemarie Said Zahlan, *The Making of the Modern Gulf States : Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman*, Updated ed. (Reading: Ithaca Press, 1998).

highly useful historical overview expanding on the phases of Qatar's gas projects.[61] Justin Dargin has also contributed to this topic in particular with an excellent overview.[62]

The closer to the present the more one is reliant on informative newspaper and magazine articles. This requires a careful and circumspect selection of relevant articles. Often, and particularly as Qatar's popularity picked up from the mid-2000s onwards, articles on Qatar can be highly general, profoundly lacking in depth or knowledgeable analysis, and clearly written by journalists with little (if any) experience of Qatar. Indeed, even the late, great Anthony Shadid followed the trend of flying into Qatar, spending 36 hours walking around the Museum, the Souq, and Education City, leaving and writing a sloppy article, heavy on generalisations and low on critical analysis.[63]

The Financial Times is typically a good place to start. Not only is the coverage of Qatar usually directed from a place of expertise (i.e. financial business) but there are several journalists who, for many years, have produced a wealth of interesting and insightful articles focusing on Qatar. Simeon Kerr,[64] Robin Wigglesworth,[65] Roula Khalaf,[66] and James Drummond[67] can typically be relied upon to write knowledgeably about Qatar, often at reasonable length.

The New York Times, when it does cover Qatar, often does so with skill.[68] Robert Worth, for example, has written several excellent articles on Qatar,[69] including one of the most useful.[70]

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[61] Hashimoto, Elass, and Eller, "Liquified Natural Gas from Qatar: The Qatargas Project."

[62] Justin Dargin, "The Gas Revolution in Qatar," in *Natural Gas Markets in the Middle East and North Africa*, ed. Bassam Fattouh and Jonathan Stern (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[63] Shadid, "Qatar Wields an Outsized Influence in Arab Politics."

[64] Simeon Kerr, "Qatari Flagship Moves into Unique Space," *The Financial Times* 20 April 2010.
"Qatar Makes Progress in Financial Race," *The Financial Times* 6 November 2008.
"Dream to Score for the Region," *The Financial Times* 19 November 2009.

[65] Robin Wigglesworth, "Banks Knocking on the Door," ibid.
"Us Air Base on Qatari Soil Tests Emirate's Capacity to Duck Gulf Tensions," *The Financial Times* 24 September 2010.
"Qatar Seeks Its Next 'Pearl'," *The Financial Times* 17 June 2010.

[66] Roula Khalaf, "Qatar Looks to Reap Benefits from Playing in the Big League," ibid. 31 March 2011.
"Doha Makes New Friends and Enemies," *The Financial Times* 19 November 2009.

[67] James Drummond, "Gamble on Gigantic Lng Project Is Set to Come Good," *The Financial Times* 9 December 2008.

[68] Youssef Ibrahim, "54 Qatar Citizens Petition Emir for Free Elections," *New York Times* 13 May 1992.
Clyde Haberman, "Israel Seeks Deal with Qatar on Gas," ibid. 29 October 1993.
Douglas Jelh, "Qatar's Treasure Trove of Gas - Tiny Gulf Emirates May Have a 200-Year Supply," ibid. 23 July 1997.

Vying with Worth for the most useful Qatar-focused article was a recent long article by Hugh Eakin of the New York Review of Books, perhaps the single best introduction to Qatar yet written.[71]

Otherwise, one is left scouring other newspapers where gems do indeed turn up sporadically, including 'special reports' on Qatar, which can be highly useful as can Political Risk Analysis documents.[72] Though only a smattering of these are publically available, when they focus directly on Qatar, they provide an intelligent and highly competent overview and analysis.[73] The Gulf States Newsletter (GSN) with its archive going back to the late 1990s is something of a unique source of information. Collated and analysed by staff on the ground across the Gulf, GSN is consistently the best source for hard-to-find information and analysis.

The Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) is another superlative source. Its use primarily stems from its coverage of events as far back as the 1940s. Ran by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) it translated, monitored, and republished a selection of foreign newspaper articles, radio broadcasts, speeches, and news agency releases from across the world. Its more accessible online archive from 1974-1996 in particular offers a Qatar researcher a plotted history of, for example, Embassy openings and foreign aid donations. Though one cannot say with certainty that such FBIS documents are completely comprehensive and they are often simply sentences announcing a policy with no background or analysis, the nuggets of information can be exceedingly useful when slotted into a more rounded context.

The Economist Intelligence Unit's 'Country Reports' are a useful and consistent source from the March 1996 onwards. Though their analysis must always be corroborated, it presents

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[69] Robert F Worth, "Small, Hot and Loaded with Cash," *The New York Times* 2 December 2010.
"Al Jazeera No Longer Nips at Saudis," *New York Times* 4 January 2008.
"Seizing a Moment, Al Jazeera Galvanizes Arab Frustration," *New York Times* 27 January 2011.
[70] "Qatar, Playing All Sides, Is a Non Stop Mediator," *New York Times* 9th July 2008.
[71] Eakin, "The Strange Power of Qatar."
[72] "Special Report on Qatar (7 Parts)," *The Times* 12 November 1985.
Louay Y. Bahry, "A Qatari Spring," *Middle East Insight* 2000 September-October.
[73] "Qatar: Middle East and North Africa. Risk Ratings," in *PRS Group/International Country Risk Guide* (September 1992).

single best regular reference work available to scholars.[74] Indeed, with Qatar one is perennially searching for a reliable source of information sometimes even of the most basic facts, such as a political reshuffle. For this kind of information along with consistent analysis, these reports can be useful.

The leak of American diplomatic cables ('Wikileaks' or 'Cablegate') also provide an interesting mix of primary and secondary resources. These documents often provide transcripts of private conversations between, in this case, Qatar's elite and, for example, the American Ambassador in Doha or visiting American dignitaries. While one need understand that there is always the concern that Qatar's elite are, to some degree, telling U.S. officials what they want to hear or what they think will best suit Qatar's needs vis-à-vis their U.S. relationship, the leaks are highly revealing and, when triangulated with other evidence, can be critically useful. Other leaks that are equally interesting and useful are records of conversations between diplomats in Doha, often recounting conversations about Qatar with senior Ministers in other countries. For example, the conversation relayed by a former Egyptian Deputy Ambassador in Qatar to an American official of his briefing from the Egyptian Foreign Minister detailing that Egypt will under no circumstances support Qatar's mediatory efforts in Darfur no matter how justified, speaks to the nature of the Qatari-Egyptian relationship and Egypt's deep concern over its political sphere of influence.[75]

Aside from these diplomatic cables there are a few primary sources of transcripts of conversations and interviews with the Emir, Sheikha Moza, and Hamad Bin Jassem Al Thani. While some of these are platitudinous interviews on American TV shows revealing little, some are unusually interesting.[76] Or particular note is an interview with the Emir in the Financial Times, in Arabic in Lebanese Newspaper As Safir, and an interview with Hamad Bin Jassem by Daniel Pipes (of all people) in 1996 for Middle East Quarterly.[77]

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[74] For example, "Qatar & Bahrain Country Report," in *Country Reports* (London: The Economist, March 1996).
[75] "Wikileaks: Egypt Determined to Thwart Qatar Initiatives Including Darfur," *Sudan Tribune* 15 June 2011.
[76] "A Conversation with the Emir of Qatar," *Charlie Rose*(28 September 2007)
[77] Daniel Pipes, "Interview with Hamad Bin Jassim Bin Jabr Al Thani," *Middle East Quarterly* (December 1996).
Martin Dickson and Roula Khalaf, "Interview Transcript: Qatar's Sheikh Hamad," *The Financial Times*(24 October 2010)
Talal Salman, "An Old Dialogue with the Emir of Qatar in the Context Of: Israel Being a Gatekeeper of Arab Affiliation with Washington," *As Safir* 21 October 2009.

## Theory

Under the Church of 'Foreign Policy', as with international relations as a whole, there are four broad schools each of which has numerous derivatives. A more thorough analysis of these theoretical schools will be undertaken in the subsequent theory and methods chapter, but the schools will be briefly introduced here in order to place the theoretical approach of this thesis in its literary context.

Realism as a school of thought claims a long and illustrious history of thinkers and practitioners: Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Clausewitz, and Bismarck being some of its acclaimed antecedents.[78] In the early twentieth century it is most closely associated with the likes of Kennan and Morgenthau.[79] The traditional realist school of foreign policy focuses on traditionally realist conceptions: the state level as the key level of analysis; the state itself as an actor of unique importance; the international system of states as in a perpetual state of anarchy; and thus self-interested states must fend for themselves in a constant power struggle to survive.

One iteration of realist thought leads to, for example, the balance of power system. In a Middle Eastern context, this kind of an outlook can seem appealing: the emphasis on power and balancing innately seems to make some sense. A glance at the competitive relationship between Saudi Arabia and Iran, for example, leads to such a basic conclusion. Yet equally, by typically ignoring the internal workings of the state and in particular references to the leader and the role of the elites, realism ignores a crucial factor afoot in the Middle East. Even Waltz's neo-realism which sought to introduce some appreciation of what happened inside the 'black box' of the state is still some distance from taking the internal workings seriously enough and lending them the weight that they deserve.[80] While this is true for the Middle East as a whole, it is particularly true in the Gulf States where the leader is unusually powerful thanks to a combination of a small population, a tribal heritage privileging the

[78] Thucydides, Martin Hammond, and P. J. Rhodes, *The Peloponnesian War* (New York ; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Tim Parks (London: Penguin, 2009).
Thomas Hobbes, A. P. Martinich, and Brian Battiste, *Leviathan. Parts 1and 2* (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview ; London : Eurospan).
Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, New and revised edition. ed. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1956).
[79] Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1958).
[80] Kenneth Neal Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass. ; London: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

leader, and a modern socio-economic-political apparatus maintaining typically highly centralised rule. Thus while the fundamental assertion of realism that states operate in a self-help system and power rules is appealing and a useful concept in the febrile Middle East, realism's ignorance of the black box makes it unsuitable for wider application as a theoretical framework for this thesis.

The fundamental reaction to this state-centric approach was to delve into the state. Foreign Policy Analysis as a distinct and modern subject emerged in the late 1950s with the works of Richard Snyder, James Rosenau, and Margaret and Harold Sprout.[81] Significantly, these works all sought to eschew the traditional, prevalent realist focus at the state level and instead opened up the state's 'black-box.' This bequeathed "FPA [Foreign Policy Analysis] its characteristic emphasis on foreign policy decision making as versus foreign policy *outcomes*."[82] Specifically, the bureaucracies, the elites, their perceptions, and their decisions are of key concern. Hence rationality as an enduring concept was questioned as was the necessary external nature of foreign policy. This last facet in particular is of direct relevance to the Qatari case study where policies aimed domestically arguably have audiences abroad as do foreign policies have audiences domestically.

Small group dynamics, initially studied by Irving Janis with his work *Victims of Groupthink*, was one furrow which subsequently emerged under FPA.[83] This begat a closer focus on small group dynamics and on bureaucracies themselves. Stemming from Rosenau's original work, Comparative Foreign Policy (CFP) emerged with the aim of defining of "law-like

[81] Richard C. Snyder, H. W. Bruck, and Burton Sapin, *Decision-Making as an Approach to the Study of International Politics* ([Princeton]: Organizational behavior section, Princeton university, 1954).
James N Rosenau, "Pre-Theories and Theories of Foreign Policy," in *Approaches to Comparative and International Politics*, ed. R. Barry Farrell (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1966).
Harold Hance Sprout, Sprout, and Margaret Tuttle Sprout, *The Ecological Perspective on Human Affairs. With Special Reference to International Politics* (pp. xi. 236. Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1965). This 1965 book was an updated version of earlier articles.
[82] Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield, and Tim Dunne, eds., *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p.13. Italics in original.
[83] Irving L. Janis, *Victims of Groupthink; a Psychological Study of Foreign-Policy Decisions and Fiascoes* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin 1972).

generalizations" from empirical studies.[84] A strand of scholarship also focussed on leadership and the potential misperceptions of the elite.[85]

By emphasizing the role of the elite FPA is clearly important in the Qatari context; however, the lack of an explicit or sufficient focus on the state-level and on the often crude modalities of power so important in the Middle Eastern context, means that the FPA approach – like realism – is not sufficient on its own.

Liberalism as an explanatory theory is interesting in the same way that FPA is, in that it focuses on people and their effect on large-scale processes. While liberalism can be a broad church and is often misunderstood or mischaracterised, liberalism in the world of foreign policy seeks to inculcate within the process of foreign policy concerns of interests, ideals, and the importance of institutions.[86] This contrasts explicitly with realism's approach. Instead of realism's assumptions about the direct and immutable effects of the state system on outcomes, liberalism as a foreign policy approach is complicated. Indeed, concerned as it is with "individual rights, private property, and representative government, liberalism is a domestic theory."[87]

For Locke, though he believed the international system to be anarchic just Like Hobbes, he fundamentally posits that rule is based on consent. The social contract in his vision went both ways and sought to enshrine individuals' rights 'life, liberty and happiness' as opposed to a more abstract, state-centric Hobbesian conception. From the Qatari perspective, such Lockian notions strike a chord of relevance with the traditional role of the Sheikh being to provide for his people. While such tropes can sound like patronising Orientalism the fact remains that a significant part of the quietism in Qatari politics stems from conservative conceptions of the ruling bargain whereby citizens leave the rulers to rule. While this is a simplification of a complex conception there is an undeniable comparison at play, which is interesting to note.

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[84] Smith, Hadfield, and Dunne, *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, p.19.
[85] Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J. ; Guildford: Princeton University Press, 1976).
[86] Stephen C. Pelletiere, *The Iran-Iraq War : Chaos in a Vacuum* (New York ;
London: Praeger, 1992).
"Qatar National Vision 2030," (July 2008)
[87] Smith, Hadfield, and Dunne, *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, p.59.

Another central concept of liberalism located within the 'second image' as Waltz puts it, is concerned with the positive impact on commerce on the international system. Thinkers from Adam Smith through Schumpeter to Hirschman commented on this phenomenon from differing perspectives but all posited that trade begets more peaceful relations.[88] One can see this logic in Qatar's policies particularly in the early 1990s regarding the plans expansion of trading Qatari gas via pipelines around the Gulf and onto India and Pakistan.

As the twentieth century progressed a whole new facet of ties – primarily economic – began "entangling states in a network of interdependencies," thus questioning the crucial unitary importance of states.[89] Thus new theories emerged that sought to answer these emerging issues.

Constructivism, for example, is more sociological in nature and posits that goals, values, and policies are derived from – constructed from – within the state, which is in turn constructed from this 'web of intersubjective understandings' as Wendt quixotically puts it.[90] Specifically for foreign policy, constructivists focus on how a certain interest is constructed, be that via socialization, norms (social, political, etc.) or the general socio political discourse.

Vendulka Kubalkova's work on foreign policy and constructivism eloquently explains how these concepts fit together.[91] A constructivist analysis of foreign policy can be defined in three broad ways. First, constructivists, following on from FPA analysts, focus on bureaucracies. Instead of asking how a Foreign Ministry represents a country's interests it explores "how interests are constructed through a process of social interaction."[92] Second, constructivists would argue that foreign policy actors do not make their decisions on the international stage in a vacuum. Instead, decisions are made in a communicative, bargaining process with other international actors. Third is the role of international society and states. For example, scholars have focused on human rights and posited that it is thanks to NGOs

[88] Gray, *Qatar : Politics and the Challenges of Development*.
[89] Steve Smith, "Theories of Foreign Policy: An Historical Overview," *Review of International Studies* Vol. 12(1986): p.13.
[90] For an approachable but rigorous article placing constructivism in the context of international relations theory, see Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *International Security* 23, no. 1 (Summer 1998).
[91] Vendulka Kubalkova, ed. *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World* (Armonk, N.Y. ; London: M.E. Sharpe, 2001).
[92] Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Constructivism and Foreign Policy," in *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, ed. Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield, and Tim Dunne (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p.74.

and other pan-border organizations that domestic actors as well as governments come to learn and define their own levels and ideas regarding human rights. It is through the interplay, interaction, and discussion of these issues that, for example, a country may change its human rights policy.

This approach is attractive and in vogue. Using it as an approach to Qatar's foreign policy, however, would be difficult by itself. Crucially, Qatar's foreign policy is made by such a small and essentially unrepresentative elite that any notions of, say, Qatar's negotiations in Sudan stemming from any kind of domestic desire or discussion, is far-fetched. In essence, it is difficult to see how Qatar's foreign policies are the result of some kind of intersubjective understandings with the Qatari people such is the degree to which they are atypical policies in the Qatari historical experience.

Instead of using any one school of thought for this study, a broader, more complex approach is sought. Each theory has its merits and its concerns and each has aspects that can explain certain policies as briefly outlined. Following the ground breaking work of Gerd Nonneman, this study seeks to harness the advantages of each one to form a more comprehensive theory.

Nonneman's framework for analysing foreign policy has been specifically devised in a Middle Eastern context.[93] It seeks to look both domestically, regionally, and internationally for a detailed examination of the factors that can contribute to a state's foreign policy. Of the domestic determinants of foreign policy, for example, Nonneman focuses on the nature of the state (is it secure; are national identities consolidated?); on its capabilities (economic and demographic resources); on its decision making system and on the perceptions and role conceptions of decision makers.[94] This facet of the analytical typology alone must take into account traits of various traditions from traditionally realist conceptions (base security concerns) to ideas traditionally associated with constructivism (national identities).

[93] Gerd Nonneman, ed. *Analyzing Middle East Foreign Policies: A Conceptual Framework* (Abdingdon, UK: Routledge, 2005).
[94] See "Analyzing Middle East Foreign Policies: A Conceptual Framework," in *Analyzing Middle East Foreign Policies*, ed. Gerd Nonneman (Abdingdon, UK: Routledge, 2005).

This thesis also makes tactical use of other theories such as state branding and soft power.[95] Both of these theories are relatively new emerging in the recent decades in their current form. Using the work of Van Ham, Olins, and the articles collected in a special issue of the *Journal of Brand Management,* this thesis will certainly add to the growing repertoire of case studies for state branding.[96]

[95] Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power : The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).

[96] Peter Van Ham, "Place Branding: The State of the Art," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616, no. 1 (2008).
"The Rise of the Brand State: The Postmodern Politics of Image and Reputation."
Wally Olins, "Branding the Nation - the Historical Context," *Journal of Brand Management* 9, no. 4-5 (2002).
Phillip Kotler and David Gertner, "Country as Brand, Product, and Beyond: A Place Marketing and Brand Management Perspective," *Brand Management* 9, no. 4-5 (April 2002).
Nicolas Papadopoulos and Louise Heslop, "Country Equity and Country Branding: Problems and Prospects," ibid.(2002).

# Chapter 2: Methodology & Theoretical Framework

## Key Research Question

Qatar underwent a vast and deep transformation in the 1990s. The history of Qatar from the mid-nineteenth century up to the 1970s and 1980s was of a country that fundamentally and explicitly sought to avoid the international lime-light, that was perennially behind its neighbours in most if not all metrics of development, and that was a traditional, conservative, state with goals commensurate to its small size.

Qatar of the late 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s is the antithesis of this 'old Qatar.' Publicity and international notoriety was sought relentlessly and proactively. Qatar leapt forward in terms of development and began to be known as one of the most progressive Gulf States on numerous fronts. While its elite remained traditional in some aspects so too it promoted unabashedly liberal policies compared to its own history and compared to its region, particularly regarding emancipating women and promoting pan-religious understanding. Lastly the goals of Qatar exploded from seeking little more than a quiet, cosy, protective relationship with Saudi Arabia to the widest blue-sky thinking imaginable with, for example, building relations with America, Israel and Iran and taking the lead role in the Arab Spring. Fundamentally this thesis seeks to understand this remarkable transition. Why did Qatar change so starkly?

The working hypothesis for this thesis is that these changes were devised and directed by a small cabal in Qatar's elite with little active outside interference or domestically driven demands for fundamental change. The new, young elite are believed to have had a fundamentally different conception for Qatar's outlook and orientation. Such new ideas were driven by an appreciation of Qatar's history, which is a history of dependency and relative weakness, and a modern understanding of the importance of economic diversification. The creation and propagation of a new business-savvy, attractive, modern, and culturally sophisticated brand for Qatar was an intrinsic part of this whole plan which relied on boosting Qataris soft power. This would answer key security issues by boosting Qatar's visibility and inculcating Qatar to ever greater degrees into the economies of the world's leading states, while simultaneously improving Qatar's business credentials; a centrally important aspect in Qatar's quest to diversify its economy.

## Methodologies: Qualitative v Quantitative

Understanding and evaluating the vast changes that took place in Qatar's policies from the early 1990s is broadly a qualitative question. While there are quantities that could be evaluated (e.g. the number of mediatory forays attempted or the amount of money spent on foreign aid) there are several problems with basing conclusions on such points alone.

Firstly, records kept in Qatar are sporadic and largely inaccessible. There is simply not a coherent or trustworthy body of statistical evidence available that could provide statistically significant data for conclusions. Secondly, even if such statistics were available ascertaining a link between, for example, a greater spending on foreign aid and a supposed overarching change in foreign policy, this is problematic. Without significant qualitative contextualisation knowing that the number of mediatory forays increased is not useful for this does not overtly speak to causation but merely denotes correlation. Overall, this topic is subjective and resistant to empirical explanation alone.

Hence the key methods used in this thesis are qualitative in nature. Specifically, in addition to using primary source documents where possible and a range of secondary sources, personal interviews with a diverse range of actors forms the core of this thesis. There are a range of concerns that must be addressed when using interviews. Clearly, no one person is 'correct' and everyone is imbued with their own biases, to say nothing of those with a particular agenda. Aware of these issues, the key to the success of this technique is triangulation.

For example, after speaking to seven Ambassadors in Doha from smaller nations, the impression given was that the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs was so critically understaffed and so under pressure that it was almost incapable of performing its basic duties, such was the difficulty that these Embassies typically encountered when interacting with MOFA in seeking, for example, a meeting for a visiting dignitary. However, after conversations with the Russian Ambassador, two British, and three Chinese Ambassadors it became clear that while MOFA is certainly busy and stretched as an organisation, whether a diplomat gets an audience with a Minister is more a function of the perceived utility of the country: the more important the country, the easier to get an audience. While this is to be

expected, this one small example neatly highlights the importance of a diverse source of interviewees before conclusions are drawn.

There are also specific concerns in the Qatari context to overcome. Firstly, in terms of cultural context, Qataris are, as a whole, reticent about discussing political and social matters. This reticence in Qatar is in stark comparison to Kuwait where – on the whole – a garrulous culture pervades, likely stemming for their decades living with a rambunctious Parliament, discussions on topical political and social questions are easy to initiate and opinions are typically free-flowing.[97] Yet in Qatar, while there are notable exceptions, typically Qataris eschew discussing overtly political matters and will shy away from discussing matters which could be perceived as criticising the government. This is not due to an oppressive state security network or necessarily fears of consequences were these conversations to come to light, but instead due to the highly conservative social scriptures in Qatar that instil a hierarchical deference.[98]

Secondly, there are basic problems to do with numbers: there are not many Qataris to go around. In the Foreign Ministry, for example, until 2012 there was one department for Asian and African Affairs; one Ambassador and head of department dealing with the ninety-nine countries in the two largest continents on earth, including pivotally important states like China, India, Japan, South Korea, and Sudan. Experience and interviews in Qatar suggests that no-one below the Ambassador's level would be willing to speak to a researcher and the Minister has much to do other than speak to a researcher. Moreover, the simple fact is that Qatari policy is made much higher up the chain of command than Department head.

Instead of interviewing Ambassadors in MOFA on the record, a broader range of interviewees was sought. As much time based in Qatar as possible was procured not only to establish a diverse set of relations but to establish trust to allow in-depth and detailed conversations. On this point in particular, this thesis is grounded strongly. By the conclusion of this PhD, it will have taken approximately twice as long as a traditional British PhD. The majority of this time has been spent in Qatar firstly on a nine month long Arabic course at

[97] While these statements are assertions, they are based on years of living, working, and undertaking research in both countries. While there are notable exceptions to such a rule, both conclusions are routinely backed up by others conducting research in these countries.
[98] There are, however, certain concerns that are mentioned elsewhere in this thesis.

Qatar University and secondly running the Qatar office for the Royal United Services Institute for Security and Defence's (RUSI). Four years living in the small town of Doha has enabled the researcher to embed himself in the expatriate and, to some degree, the local Qatar community. Being the Director of RUSI has enabled the author to work closely with key Government Ministries and a range of Embassies in Qatar. Furthermore, the nature of the work has facilitated interaction, conversation, and the establishment of business relationships with leading business people, diplomats, and experts both in Qatar and the wider region. The RUSI experience has significantly diversified the range of those interviewed for this thesis as well as simply adding vastly to the numbers concerned. However, there is also a careful distinction to be made. Much of the work undertaken with RUSI was done under strict terms of confidentiality and the position in RUSI has not been used as a stepping-stone to interview Qatari Ministers or to use parts of private conversations for this thesis. At the same time it is impossible not to develop opinions, have personal hypothesis tested, affirmed, and contradicted in the daily business of living and working in Qatar at a high level.

Aside from these ethical issues of not using private and privileged conversations in the thesis there are also considerations to be pondered regarding potential limits of the author's academic freedom given pre-existing and continuing links with RUSI in Qatar. Simultaneously, when working, studying, researching, and writing about a country that is undemocratic in nature, there are always concerns to be addressed. One must forcefully interrogate the potential concern of self-censorship by the author in light of said issues. While it is just and proper that these concerns are evaluated, it is contended that they are not of direct relevance to this specific case for four reasons.

Firstly, RUSI is the world's oldest think-tank and has been operating for over 180 years. Its reputation is by far the most important and valuable commodity it possesses. From RUSI's perspective it is quite simply not worth jeopardising this long-established and centrally important reputation with the Director of its Qatar office authoring a book with a weak critique or which actively dodges difficult questions.

Secondly, the author has written over fifty articles, book chapters, papers, opinion pieces, and hundreds of blog posts covering all aspects of Qatar many of which contain significant

criticism. In short, the author's reputation as someone who stridently puts forth his opinion is available for public appraisal.

Thirdly, over the years studying Qatar the author has had the chance to meet and interact with various members of Qatar's elite by they in the public or private sector. Thus far the author is yet to meet a Qatari who would take offence at a book focusing in-depth on Qatar, which offers a reasoned, nuanced, and knowledgeable critique. As long as criticism is not levelled in an *ad hominem* fashion, it is liable to be received with equanimity (if it is read at all), or at least it is unlikely to be received in a hostile fashion. Moreover, on a literal level after five years of studying and writing on Qatar including several working for RUSI no Qatari official has ever voiced any concerns as to the author's work and neither intimated nor explicitly noted red lines not to be crossed or issues to be avoided.

Fourthly, this thesis is focusing on explaining key changes in Qatar's foreign policy. Much of this is descriptive and explanatory. Certainly, opinions are voiced as to efficacy or suitability of policies, but the central question is not whether Qatar's foreign policy is good or bad but what *is* Qatar's foreign policy and why did it change.

## Interview theory

The literature on interviewing suggests several factors are key to keep in mind when conducting all kinds of interviews. Though the literature is voluminous, the advice can be roughly divided into two broad topics: the interview questions themselves along with their interpretation and the behaviour of the interviewer during the conversation.

### *Questions*

Cicourel notes that one must question the assumptions of the meanings of words: what is clear to one person may not be to another, or indeed, it may mean something else.[99] In the Qatari context this is important where the language barrier must be considered at times too. Similarly, Kvale notes that questions "should be easy to understand, short and devoid of jargon."[100] Patton reminds the interviewer that people have a tendency to lump a number

[99] A U Cicourel, *Method and Measurement in Sociology* (New York: Free Press, 1964).
[100] S Kvale, *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualatarive Research Interviewing* (London: Sage Publications, 1996), p.130.

of questions together, whereas it is likely to be advantageous – again, especially in an English as a second language context – if questions are asked one at a time.

Moreover, such questions ought to be open-ended so as not to implicitly dictate a certain answer. A simple example of this would be asking "do you think that Qatar's foreign policy changed after 1995?" as opposed to "why do you think Qatar's foreign policy changed so markedly after 1995?" Even though the researcher in this case wants to know the answer to the second question, this can be ascertained by judicious use of follow up questions. Cohen and Manion, for example, discuss 'funnelling' where questions start off broad and general and get more specific.[101] Such a specific notion is not necessary at times; indeed, seeking simple clarifications or elaboration to elicit more information, again, without leading the conversation, as suggested by Kvale[102] can be crucial in getting to the interesting nub of an issue.

Lastly, as Cicourel cautions, one must be sensitive to the sensitivities of the interviewee. This is of particular concern in Qatar where one must judiciously ask certain questions so as not to arouse fears of straying onto difficult topics.

### *Behaviour*

Clearly, establishing a rapport with the interviewee is important, as noted by Kvale.[103] Directing the conversation in ways of relevance to the thesis while not over-riding the interviewee or ignoring what they are saying is key. Similarly, encouraging discussion of at times sensitive issues is a skill. Typically, this can only be done by establishing a relationship over a period of time, especially in Qatar. The use of the Arabic language can be useful in this regard. For almost all of the interviews, the introductions and opening statements were done in fluent Arabic (when needed). Indeed, there was often follow up in Arabic about where I learned the language and such conversation. Typically, the interviewee is pleased to see that significant time has clearly been taken to learn a key part of the Arab culture, the Arabic language, which, it must not be forgotten, stems – at least nominally – from the key

[101] Louis Cohen and Lawrence Manion, *Research Methods in Education* (London: Routledge, 1994).
[102] Kvale, *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualatarive Research Interviewing*, p.133.
[103] Ibid., p.148.

religious text. Subsequently the conversation was changed to English to facilitate deliberate and specific questioning strategies that may have become lost in translation.

More generally, having lived in the Middle East and the Gulf specifically for approaching five years, the interviewer has a good idea of how to approach different types of interviewees. Aside from a cultural understanding of how to hold one's self and conduct one's business gleaned over the years, specific phrases were used with specific types of people. To Qataris I introduced myself as 'David Roberts, a student from Durham University in the UK.' To foreigners of all stripes I introduced myself as 'David Roberts, a researcher from Durham University in the UK.' The difference is subtle, but important nonetheless. Qataris feel less threatened by being presented with a student. Being instead presented with a 'researcher' or a 'PhD student', for example, presents a more formal front, which can provoke a more guarded response. Not forgetting the intrinsic Qatari reticence about discussing sensitive political or social issues, Qataris feel more in control when speaking to 'just' a student as opposed to a more authoritative 'researcher' who might ask more probing or difficult questions. Whereas foreigners, especially Ambassadors and their counterparts in the private sector (i.e. in high office), are far more likely to accept an interview if it is with a 'researcher' from a top UK University as opposed to just a student. Such people tend not to have the same concerns about 'revealing' any information being far more used to discussion and conversation of this type. Needless to say on all occasions I explicitly stated the reason for the interview as contributing either on or off the record to the research for a PhD and subsequent book on Qatar.

## Impediments

Aside from the cultural difficulties inherent in interviewing Qataris, the key Qatar-specific difficulty is the lack of available primary material. The country's records are sporadic and inaccessible. Even were these documents available, given the leviathan bureaucracy that tiny-Qatar manages to instil, gaining access would have proven to be problematic.

Equally a lack of a true fluency in Arabic is also an impediment that must noted. While in Qatar on the Arabic course, conversations could be held without problems on most matters, if the inflections were sometimes lost. Yet when it came to reading, this could simply not be done at a feasible speed. What texts have been read in Arabic are a relatively small

proportion of those available. This hamartia is not a severe impediment as Qatar suffers equally badly in Arabic as in English for having been largely passed by as a topic for books for decades now.

## Theoretical Framework

This thesis employs two stages to its overall theoretical framework. First, a meta-theory explaining the genesis of foreign policies is created is outlined. Second, several tactical theories (soft power and branding) are used to elucidate the underlying motives behind several of the newer policies.

### Time Frame

The study of Qatar's history reveals that there were significant changes in tenor and practical changes in policy direction in Qatar beginning in the late-1980s that gathered speed as the 1990s and 2000s progressed. It is tempting to note the pivotal date as 1995 when Hamad Bin Khalifah Al Thani and the other key instigators of these policy changes came to power, but there are important examples of policy changes in the early 1990s, particularly in the foreign policy arena. Cumbersomely, therefore, the thesis will refer to the changes in the late 1980s and early 1990s rather than plumb for a less accurate if more streamlined reference to 1995 as 'the date' when things changed.

To highlight and ultimately explain the policy changes and their genesis, this thesis takes a historical approach, laying out the history of Qatar and the subsequent traits that emerged. Only with a plotted history of Qatar is it possible to discern the true level of changes that took place from the late 1980s onwards. This study will examine Qatar's policies up until Qatar's involvement in the Arab Spring, which signals a key development in Qatar's foreign policy.

### Foreign Policy

Most of the changes in policy that are the central concern of this thesis are changes in the foreign policy arena. A refreshed relationship with Iran as personified by Qatar's attempts to import water by pipeline in the early 1990s being one clear example of a new foreign policy. Equally, however, there are other policies which are vastly different to their predecessors, which are of interest to this thesis that are not traditionally located within the foreign policy realm. Despite not necessarily falling traditionally under the banner of foreign policy, all of these policies have links to the international world, such as Qatar's desire to foster itself as a meetings, conferences, incentives, and exhibitions (MICE) leader by investing heavily in its domestic tourism infrastructure. Similarly, Qatar's education initiatives, while demonstrably

domestically orientated nevertheless act as a significant link to America (and to the UK and France to lesser degrees) and radiate one of the key fonts of Qatari soft power throughout the wider region: education.

The definition of foreign policy for this thesis will be specialised to allow for the specific Qatari context, not that there is a simple definition of foreign policy, as Beach notes.[104] Early in his work on the evolution of foreign policy, Christopher Hill offers the following basic definition: "the sum of official external relations conducted by an official independent actor (usually a state) in international relations."[105] Yet Hill soon nuances this view stating that "Foreign policy is...both more and less than the 'external relations' which states generate continually on all fronts."[106]

Following on from the diffusion of foreign policy that Hill alludes to, for the purposes of this thesis, foreign policy will be understood as '*the actions and policies emanating from official Qatari Governmental organs aimed significantly at external actors.'* Such a definition has many advantages.

Firstly, given the lack of clarity perennially associated with the Qatari Government such as their lack of press releases to adequately explain a policy, it is prudent not to limit one's material to 'policies' alone. Other actions taken by official Qatari actors are of interest to this thesis too. If one relied solely on official policy statements regarding Qatar's relations with Israel, for example, then one would place unnecessary and unworkable constraints when evaluating this relationship.

Secondly, it is sensible not to limit the policies and actions taken as foreign policies solely to those emitted by the Qatar Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Not only does the Emir and Crown Prince 'conduct' aspects of Qatar's foreign policy as they see fit, but other Ministries and entities engage in activities that can clearly be seen as building on existing Qatari policies. It would be foolish, for example, to ignore the commercial aspects of Qatar's investments or its LNG deals from a discussion in this thesis.

[104] Derek Beach, *Analyzing Foreign Policy* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p.1.
[105] Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy* (Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), p.3.
[106] Ibid., p.5.

Lastly, foreign policy is not necessarily aimed at states. Not only in the Middle East are there definitional issues with concepts like statehood but a significant portion of Qatar's policies are aimed at a much more diverse range of actors than states, such as sub-state actors, businesses, other countries' populations, and potential customers of many varieties.

## Alternative approaches: the path not taken

### *World Systems Theory & the Core-Periphery Dynamic*

There are a variety of theoretical approaches that could have been used by this thesis. Parts of the dependency theory literature and particularly the focus on the core and the periphery are potentially applicable to the Qatari context. In particular when Qatar in the early 1990s seeks American protection one can reasonably describe the two countries as entering a patron-client relationship according to a traditional understanding of the concept.[107] Certainly, the element of reciprocity is present in the Qatari-US relationship just as it is central to the client-patron relationship more generally.[108]

Aside from theoretical issues with assimilating differing levels of analysis inherent with the client-patron concept, this theory is in no way nimble enough to help explain Qatar's policies.[109] Theories of how the dependent states' foreign policies often come to reflect the key interests of more powerful nations focus on the bargaining model and on the dependency model.[110] In other words, the weaker state adopts the policies of the suzerain due to the "use of reward and punishment…[whereby] 'the foreign policy behaviour of dependencies is viewed as partial payment in exchange for the maintenance of benefits they derive from their economic ties to the dominant country.'"[111] Alternatively the dependency explanation posits that the reliance of the weaker state on the stronger is so profound and structural that an elite comes to power in the weaker state "whose interests,

[107] Don Van Natta, "Last American Combat Troops Quit Saudi Arabia," *The New York Times* 22 September 2003, p.285.
[108] Roula Khalaf and Abigail Fielding-Smith, "How Qatar Seized Control of the Syrian Revolution," *The Financial Times* 17 May 2013, p.92.
[109] Van Natta, "Last American Combat Troops Quit Saudi Arabia," p.288.
[110] Bruce E Moon, "The Foreign Policy of the Dependent State," *International Studies Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (September 1983): p.317-22.
[111] Richardson quoted in ibid., p.317.

values and perceptions have more in common with the elites of the powerful nation than with the masses in their own country."[112]

While initially plausible, neither of these explanations can hope to explain Qatar's foreign policy approach. Certainly, in the early 1990s Qatar was highly dependent upon America for its security, but it soon signed defence agreements with the UK and with France. But more fundamentally this whole core-periphery paradigm struggles to understand Qatar's unusual diversification of its international relations. If Qatar was so dependent upon America why did it seek relations with Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran much to the (often significant) annoyance of America? Nor is there subtle enough an understanding of the dynamics of regional relations on Qatar or an appreciation of the 'black box' of internal machinations within Qatar.

### *Small state theory*

Recent advances in the small state literature provide many relevant and interesting concepts, which could conceivably be applied to the Qatar case study. Indeed, some scholars have already done just this.[113] Elman for example argues against the consensus of small state foreign policy analysis and suggests that domestic level factors are not to be ignored at the expense of the typical focus on macro, structural and systemic concerns.[114] This kind of approach would be well received for looking at Qatar where the domestic level is so crucial. Equally the work of Wiberg and Neumann and Gstohl offer applicable theoretical understandings of small states.[115]

However, small state theory was not chosen as the base theory for this investigation. One problem with small state literature is in the definition. At just over 11,500 $km^2$ Qatar is undoubtedly a small country geographically. So too with a native population under 300,000 it is small population-wise, though a non-native population of around 1.9 million as of 2013

[112] Ibid., p.321.
[113] Andrew F. Cooper and Bessma Momani, "Qatar and Expanded Contours of Small State Diplomacy," in *ISA Conference* (New OrleansFebruary 2010).
[114] Miriam Fendius Elman, "The Foreign Policies of Small States: Challenging Neorealism in Its Own Backyard," *British Journal of Political Science* 25, no. 2 (1995).
[115] Hakan Wiberg, "The Security of Small Nations: Challenges and Defences," *Journal of Peace Research* 24, no. 4 (1987).
Iver B Neumann and Sieglinde Gstohl, "Lilliputlians in Gulliver's World? Small States in International Relatios," in *Centre for Small State Studies, University of Iceland* (2004).

complicates this basic metric. While measuring power is notoriously problematic, back in 1990 it would have been uncontroversial to suggest that Qatar is most certainly a small state in terms of a lack of meaningful power. However as time progressed this calculation becomes much more difficult. As Qatar's liquefied natural gas (LNG) business takes off Qatar becomes a significant world player. Equally as its mediation progresses Qatar developed significant relations around the wider Middle East region. From 2008 onwards when Qatar brokered a key settlement in Lebanon it displayed much more reach and persuasion than many expected. Again while tabulating this increase in Qatar's power is difficult (if not impossible) it certainly increased in this time period. Yet including these notions of increasing abstract 'power' of a country potentially outgrowing its own theoretical framework and becoming decidedly not 'small' in certain crucial ways (political influence, financial clout, media strength [Al Jazeera]) not only complicates the analysis but at worst proves a distraction from the analysis.

## The Meta-Framework: The Goldilocks approach

There are numerous ways of approaching the study of foreign policy depending on one's theoretical persuasion. This thesis seeks to eschew any predisposed positions and beliefs in the all-encompassing importance placed on any one factor be it fundamental insecurity (a realist trope), control of productive goods (a Marxist trope) or international cooperation (a key trope in liberalism). While, for example, realism and neo-realism speak to the importance of power and fundamental security as key factors – worthy conclusions – such theories largely exclude, say, the constructivist's focus on internal cultural factors and how they are reflected in the international system; something that has important lessons.

This thesis seeks a more holistic approach that eschews the conceit of claiming understanding of international politics via a specific set of ideas emanating from one school of thought. Instead it will incorporate aspects of the various theories of foreign policies and apply them to the Qatari context.

In the Middle Eastern context there are two sets of approaches in particular that seek to undertake such a task. One is authored by Anoush Ehteshami and Raymond Hinnebusch and the other Gerd Nonneman. There are many similarities between these two frameworks.

Both seek to determine specific foreign policy methodologies for the Middle Eastern context and both seek to provide a multi-level analysis.

Ehteshami and Hinnebusch seek to stick close to realism as a pillar, in the guise of a nuanced version of neo-realism.[116] They keep many of the key definitions incumbent upon a broadly realist position (state as the central actor seeking to maximise its autonomy in an insecure international environment often through balancing power) but explicitly note that in Middle Eastern states the state itself is under construction and consolidation thus "the dynamics of the "system level," per se, has less effect upon state behaviour than realism expects, while other levels, addressed by rival theories, have more."[117]

This is an eminently sensible conclusion to make and such conclusions are also found in Nonneman's work. The only real concern with Ehteshami and Hinnebusch's approach is that their initial starting point is strongly wedded to neo-realist concerns. While such a conception may well make sense in the Middle East given its nature as an area where security concerns and instances of power balancing are only too obvious, but this does not necessarily fit with the thrust of this thesis. This is not to say that Qatar escapes a neo-realist conception of security; indeed, it has the hardest of 'realist' security guarantees from America protecting its territory, but there is a sense that Qatar is striving for more than merely an optimal balance of power against regional adversaries. As Wright notes, neorealism has a hard time understanding the rationale behind significant intra-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) wrangling in the face of a clear and present realist danger in the shape of the perfect cultural, religious, social, political, and military 'enemy' personified in Iran.[118] Such incidents and such relations are fundamental to the nuanced understanding required to comprehend Qatar's shift of policies.

Evidence will be brought to bear indicating that Qatar is striving to significantly and systematically augment its soft power in such a way as to offer itself ways of matching and

[116] Raymond Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "Introduction: The Analytical Framework," in *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, ed. Raymond Hinnenusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami (Boulder; CO: Lynne Rienner, 2002), p.1.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Steven M. Wright, "Foreign Policy in the GCC States," in *The International Politics of the Persian Gulf*, ed. Mehran Kamrava (Syracuse; N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2011), p.74.

countering serious security concerns in ways too nuanced for realism or neo-realism to ascertain and develop.

Instead, this thesis adheres to a similar formulation but without the explicitly neorealist underpinnings; Nonneman's "complex model of international politics" approach to analysing foreign policy.[119] Following Nonneman's typology, this study eschews the fundamental assumptions of the various schools of thought, but uses the key attributes of each. Therefore, a keen awareness informing this analysis stems from Foreign Policy Analysis' insistence on the importance of delving into the state's 'black box,' but its traditional ignorance of the world system 'above' will be eschewed. Indeed, Nonneman for one suggests that this approach is crucial in the Middle Eastern context given the changeability shown in foreign policies necessitating that "enquiry should be open to the range of possible determinants that different schools in IR theory and Foreign Policy Analysis have drawn attention to."[120]

The essence of Nonneman's theoretical approach is to close the gap between the theory and the reality of international relations. It is a theory that resolutely seeks to accrue explanatory power and real world relevance. It does not judge which level of analysis is more relevant than another and does not seek to impose an ideological belief of the supremacy of the international context or domestic decision making or international commerce on the recipient of theoretical analysis. It instead provides a tailored scaffold to aid in the examination of the foreign policies of Middle Eastern states. On this point, as reviewer Samer Abboud notes, it seeks to "better integrate the Middle East region into the study of IR."[121]

It has a clear and concise approach, which is particularly useful for the comparative nature of this thesis. Divided into assessments of the domestic, regional, and international spheres it can be used to interrogate in a structured manner the key new foreign policies that an analysis of Qatar's 'old' and 'new' foreign policy will reveal. Nonneman's analysis of each level will aid in the examination of each foreign policy when held up against his framework.

[119] Nonneman, "Analyzing Middle East Foreign Policies: A Conceptual Framework," P.7.
[120] Ibid., p.11.
[121] Samer Abboud, "Review of "Analysing Middle East Foreign Policies: The Relationship with Europe"," *Journal of International Relations and Development* 11(2008): p.83.

This structured approach will make clear any repetitive themes that occur as instigating factors in the genesis of the foreign policy in question. In this way the conclusion can draw conclusions for the Qatari case as to the locus – domestically, regionally, or internationally – of the key thrust of the change in Qatari foreign policy. Aside from the ground breaking nature of the basic questions of this thesis heretofore unanswered in any depth, the thesis' conclusions will make a significant contribution to the literature as to the origins of foreign policy change in the Gulf context.

### *Domestic Level Determinants of Foreign Policy*

Early on in the development of his approach for analysing foreign policy in Middle Eastern states Nonneman notes the following *sine qua non* of international relations.

> The central pursuit of most MENA regimes remains that of domestic survival – and the search for legitimacy, acquiescence, and control to assure this, in turn supported by a search for resources to deploy in this domestic quest.[122]

In pursuit of this central and abiding goal foreign policy is but one of many bows in the quiver of States looking to secure survival. On the domestic level contributing to Foreign Policy formulation Nonneman notes that there are several direct and indirect factors to consider including the nature of the state, state capabilities, the decision making system, and the decision makers' perception of their role.

Each of these points is applicable to the Qatari context but there needs to be a change of emphasis. Nonneman's typology is an aggregate typology for states in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) but Qatar is far from the average MENA state. With a native population of only 200,000 at the Millennium, with the largest Royal family per capita in the world, as the 2000s progressed with a seemingly bottomless pit of money while having its basic security guaranteed by America, Qatar comprises an unusual set of circumstances: while all states are unique, Qatar is more unique than most.

[122] Nonneman, "The Three Environments of Middle East Foreign Policy Making and Relations with Europe," p.19.

## Decision making systems & role perception

In particular, one must emphasize the role of the Al Thani family. Not only does this fit with the overall historical approach of this thesis, but their role, as noted in subsequent chapters, has always significantly outweighed other factors in Qatar. This trend continued with Khalifah and Hamad Al Thani today, though the emphasis changed. Both tried with increasing success to cut loose from the Al Thani family and to increase their independence of action. Each did this by spreading their legitimacy wider and by seeking popular support to supplant Al Thani support. Hamad Al Thani in particular was successful at this. Yet this did not mean that the Qatari people then somehow began to have a say in policy. Instead Hamad Al Thani and a small coterie of advisors and confidants – Hamad Bin Jassem Al Thani, Sheikha Moza, Abdullah Al Attiyah, etc. – became supremely powerful and faced little institutional, familial, or other barriers to pursuing policies that they wished.

The perception of the role of the leader is a critical element. Perhaps based on similar evidence, different leaders may draw different conclusions. Different upbringings, education, or values may be the root of different decisions. Though such information as to the thought processes of leaders is all but impossible to obtain, using what secondary information is available along with primary data in the form of interviews with experts, it is possible to paint a plausible picture of these obscure but crucial issues.

## The nature of the state

Whether the state is fundamentally secure or not is the most basic concern that will impact upon Foreign Policy formulation. Any approach looking at Qatar in the context of the nature of the state would be compelled to narrow the distinction between 'the state' and the Al Thani family. Indeed, from the moment that Muhammad Al Thani is anointed the key interlocutor by the British in 1868, the Al Thani place in Qatar's power structure was set. The security of the state became increasingly synonymous with the security of the Al Thani family at the top of the Qatari tree.

The issue of 'basic security' takes on many forms from the physical security of borders, towns or the Al Thani family's place in society to questions of the degree of economic independence and dependence to issues of legitimacy and how well or not it has been established.

Concerns as to issues surrounding physical security quite clearly transfer directly into foreign policy with the desire to bandwagon, ally, or confront other state entities. Such concerns also speak to the overall foreign policy tilting regarding international organisations (to join or not to join) and overall orientation (to follow the regional consensus or not).

Questions as to the 'nature of the state' also require more esoteric notions to be analysed such as the level of consolidation of the national identity and of the legitimacy of the ruling elite. Ruling elites can bolster their legitimacy and help to consolidate national identity by overtly seeking to take charge and defend an issue of national sensitivity. This was the case in Morocco with the issue of the reintegration of the 'Spanish Sahara,' a deeply resonant concern for Moroccans: "By adroitly placing himself symbolically and politically at the head of the Saharan campaign, Hassan II saw both his legitimacy and that of the Monarchy as an institution rise substantially."[123] Following this example, particular of foreign policies will be highlighted in terms of their domestic effects specifically on emerging identity issues; an issue that emerges repeatedly.

Similarly, linking back to an earlier point, much depends on the security of the elite. If they are weak and need overt public support then elites can be pressured into pursuing policies which they otherwise might not wish to follow. Hinnebusch highlight's Sadat's 'risky war' in 1973 as being significantly promoted by public outrage over his 'no war no peace' policies.[124] One might expect such practices in a state like Qatar having received independence only in 1971. Also, it only possesses a meagre history on which to draw with little experience of the Westphalian order and it finds itself in a homogenous region of fraternal states with either exactly the same or at least similar families, histories, economies, geographies, cultures, religion, and political orders making it increasingly difficult in an age of homogenising globalisation to differentiate oneself.

## Capabilities & Decision Making

The capabilities of the state be these economic, demographic, or technological offer clear constraints upon the leadership. A lack of economic capacity to engage in a particular policy,

[123] Michael Willis and Nizar Messari, "Analyzing Moroccan Foreign Policy and Relations with Europe," ibid., p.47.
[124] Raymond Hinnebusch, *International Politics of the Middle East* (Glasgow: Manchester University Press, 2003), p.96.

for example, may persuade the leadership to engage in policies to augment the capacity such as economic liberalisation. Yet such a decision does not occur in a vacuum and the decision will be keenly weighed by the leadership. Benefit to the elite itself and the country will be weighed against the costs of engaging in such a policy, such as the relative loss of financial autonomy if one engages in the quid pro quo of, for example, seeking World Trade Organisation status.

Outwith the issue of capabilities, the issue of decision making not only encompasses issues of the decision making circle but of the perception of the decision makers. In the Qatari context this circle, as mentioned, is exceedingly small when it comes to executive decisions; Emir Khalifah's insistence of signing all cheques over $50,000 being a quick but instructive example of the acute levels of centralisation of power under his signature.[125]

### *Regional Level Determinants of Foreign Policy*

As Nonneman notes, the regional context refers not only to an actor's immediate regional environment, but trans-geographical phenomena that are especially significant in a Middle Eastern context.[126]

As for the former, the Gulf region as well as the wider Middle East has vacillated for decades to the ebb and flow of various currents of thought. Decolonisation, pan-Arabism and Islamism have waxed and waned. Each country has been affected by these (and other) waves in different ways; none have been immune. In particular, a small country like Qatar has, for most of its history, had to heed the flow and act accordingly. These factors present both constraints and opportunities for Qatar's elite.

Aside from pan-regional movements, Qatar has been acutely aware of its neighbours for they have supplied threats and opportunities to counter threats in equal measure. Even as Qatar obtained the US security guarantees, the exigencies of the region still prevailed and again constrained action.

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[125] $50,000 is typically referred to as in Hashimoto, Elass, and Eller, "Liquified Natural Gas from Qatar: The Qatargas Project," p.10. However, the former British Ambassador Colin Brant notes in his 1981 valedictory letter that it was QR300,000 or approximately £40,000 at that time. Brant, "Valedictory from Qatar: A Land of Promise," p.3.

[126] Nonneman, *Analyzing Middle East Foreign Policies: A Conceptual Framework*, p.12.

Time and again the thesis will dwell on the importance of differentiation for Qatar. It finds itself next to city-states like Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Manama that are extremely similar to Qatar in a variety of ways as mentioned. The commensurate desire to differentiate Qatar is noted throughout key policies.

Similarly, the importance of Qatari-Saudi relations will come to the fore repeatedly. The varying role perceptions of these two states, whether analysed religiously (differing versions of Salafi Islam) or basic power politics (a suzerain and a small state) are critical. Otherwise linked at the direct political level are relations with Iran, which are important on their own, but also resonate and effect Saudi bilateral relations.

### *International Level Determinants of Foreign Policy*

The international level can be seen as a vast flow of policies, alliances, opportunities, and threats to which the state is subject. Traditional small state theory would suggest that smaller states are not capable of standing against the dominant flow at any given moment but because of their size are compelled to follow, for example, the regional consensus.[127] However, this kind of assumption has been questioned by scholars, at times explicitly in relation to Qatar.[128] Given that there is no automatic expectation for how one might expect Qatar to react to the international system, the researcher must look for ad hoc effects.

Pan-global events and phenomena such as the end of the Cold War, the ramifications of the 11 September 2001 attacks, or the globalization-inspired communications revolution will affect Qatar deeply; whether they will affect Qatar more deeply because on some metrics it is a small state is an academic question of no significant relevance. Aside from esoteric notions of the international level, it will also refer straightforwardly to countries beyond Qatar's regional perimeter. Hence, for example, Japan's growing demand for gas having a direct effect on Qatar's gas policies

These large-scale occurrences will be factored into to the explanation of the development of Qatar's policies, foreign and otherwise, in terms of how they interact with on-going changes in the other levels.

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[127] J. Stephen Hoadley, "Small States as Aid Donors," *International Organization* 34, no. 1 (1980): p.124.
[128] Elman, "The Foreign Policies of Small States: Challenging Neorealism in Its Own Backyard."
Cooper and Momani, "Qatar and Expanded Contours of Small State Diplomacy."

## Tactical Theories: State Branding & Soft Power

Below the strategic theoretical underpinnings of this thesis are several theories that contribute to explaining various Qatari policies. One of the basic theories of this thesis is that there was an overt, explicit plan to foster a new, publicity-attracting brand for Qatar from the mid-1990s onwards. This claim can be evidenced with a range of policies which differ profoundly from their predecessors, but still one must rigorously explain why such policies are being entertained and pursued. Enter the literature on state branding. In judicious conjunction with theories of soft power, it is possible to fit these tactical theories into the strategic picture that is created on the back of the key theoretical underpinning of this theory; the Goldilocks theory adapted from Gerd Nonneman.

### *State Branding*

Branding as a concept for products and services, from Coca Cola to FedEx shipping, has a long and illustrious history. Only recently, however, has this concept been explicitly transferred to the state level. For this concept, Shrimp *et al* use the term 'country equity'[129] while Peter Van Ham uses the term 'brand states.'[130] Academic study of state branding and associated concepts of country equity and public diplomacy has increased significantly recently; indeed in 2005 the New York Times listed nation branding as among "the year's most notable ideas."[131]

Van Ham, one of the recent pioneers of this topic, describes it as follows: "A brand is best described as a customer's idea about a product; the "brand state" comprises the outside world's ideas about a particular country."[132]

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[129] Terence Shrimp, Saeed Saimee, and Thomas Madden, "Countries and Their Products: A Cognitive Structure Perspective," *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 21, no. 4 (1993).

[130] Van Ham, "The Rise of the Brand State: The Postmodern Politics of Image and Reputation."

[131] A general growing appreciation of the need to recognise such topics is evident from the increase in academic attention in papers and articles on the topic including a special journal edition *Brand Management* focusing specifically on such concerns in April 2002. One of the articles in this special issue conducts and inventory and taxonomy of the research into this concept to ascertain the 'state of the art'; quite clearly there is significant research being undertaken on this issue.
Papadopoulos and Heslop, "Country Equity and Country Branding: Problems and Prospects."
Nadia Kaneva, "Nation Branding: Towards an Agenda for Critical Research," *International Journal of Communication* 5(2011): p.117.

[132] Van Ham, "The Rise of the Brand State: The Postmodern Politics of Image and Reputation."

While the academic study of place branding is relatively new, this is not to say that it is a new topic. Indeed, Olins notes that France, for example, has undergone numerous rebranding exercises from Louis XIV via Bonaparte's Empire to the Fifth Republic today.

> The Tricolour replaced the Fleur de Lys, the Marseillaise became the new anthem, the traditional weights and measures were replaced by the metric system, a new calendar was introduced, God was replaced by the Supreme Being, and the whole lot was exported through military triumphs all over Europe. In other words the entire French package was changed.[133]

As Olins concludes, "you may not like the term, you may prefer to talk about a new or reinvented nation or state, but if revolutionary France was not a new brand I do now know what is."[134]

Particularly in the Gulf context, where there are numerous small states or city-states all of which are remarkably similar in terms of language, history, culture, geography, economics, politics, and society, it important to find ways to differentiate one's self from the homogenised crowd. Adopting "strategic marketing and management tools [to undertake] conscious branding" is one key way that this can be done.[135] Aside from a banal desire to 'be different,' put simply, every dollar of foreign direct investment (FDI) and every engineer that goes to Abu Dhabi is one dollar and one engineer that does not go to Doha.

Van Ham also notes that a country's "culture, political ideals, and policies" are a key part of brand creation.[136] Another way to focus on what can be used to create a brand is what kinds of attributes are attractive to businesses. Kotler notes that when businesses are scouting for possible locations they have certain criteria particularly in mind.

> A country's image results from its geography, history, proclamations, art and music, famous citizens and other features...Most country images are in fact stereotypes, extreme simplifications of the reality that are not necessarily accurate."[137]

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[133] Olins, "Branding the Nation - the Historical Context," p.242. Quoted in Van Ham, "Place Branding: The State of the Art," p.9.
[134] Olins, "Branding the Nation - the Historical Context," p.242.
[135] Kotler and Gertner, "Country as Brand, Product, and Beyond: A Place Marketing and Brand Management Perspective," p.249.
[136] Van Ham, "Place Branding: The State of the Art," p.3.
[137] Kotler and Gertner, "Country as Brand, Product, and Beyond: A Place Marketing and Brand Management Perspective," p.251.

More specifically, Kotler *et al* note that for companies looking for a new location search for the following set of concerns:

- Local labor market
- Access to customer and supplier markets
- Availability of development site facilities and infrastructure
- Transportation
- Education and training opportunities
- Quality of life
- Business climate
- Access to R&D facilities
- Capital availability
- Taxes and regulation [clarity][138]

It is possible to discern that numerous policies pursued by Qatar since 1995 can be seen as targeting these attributes suggesting that, implicitly at least, one of the key reasons behind Qatar's unusual sets of policies from the early 1990s onwards can be understood in terms of creating and boosting a brand for the country to add to its attractiveness to international commerce. This is not an option for a modern state, as Van Ham cautions.

> One has to recognize that the *un*branded [italics in original] state has a difficult time attracting economic and political attention. Why would we invest in or visit a country we do not know, and why would we pay attention to its political and strategic demands if we have no clue what the country is all about and why we should care?[139]

While endowing one's state with a distinct brand to obtain advantage has always been important, arguably as the twentieth century progressed it became even more important. The internationalisation of commerce, while having numerous positive impacts, has also

[138] Peter Kotler, D H Haider, and I Rein, *Marketing Places: Attracting Investment, Industry, and Tourism to Cities, States, and Nations* (Free Press, 1993), p.232. Quoted in Kotler and Gertner, "Country as Brand, Product, and Beyond: A Place Marketing and Brand Management Perspective," p.257.
[139] Van Ham, "Place Branding: The State of the Art."

resulted in, as Olins put it, “a very harsh and turbulent commercial environment [where] The nation that makes itself the most attractive wins the prizes – others suffer.”[140]

> Globalization and the harmonizing effects of European integration put further pressures on territorial entities to develop, manage, and leverage their brand equity. To stand out from the crowd and capture significant mind share and market share, place branding has become essential. [141]

For European integration in the Qatar context there are clear analogies with the Gulf, which will be explored below. Moreover, many of these concerns are more acute for a small state like Qatar.

Rockower states that niche diplomacy, a concept which is often involved in a symbiotic relationship with state branding, “is often associated with the pursuit of small and medium states to raise their public diplomacy profile by wedding their image with a certain cause as a way to magnify their influence within global civil society.”[142]

Qatar’s status as a young state can be both advantageous and disadvantageous. It means that Qatar must start from little to no brand identity and a commensurate struggle to firstly define its space and then to propagate its brand in a world of more established competitors. Equally, it means that Qatar does not have a negative brand perception to counter and a blank state from which to start.[143] Indeed, Tarek Atrissi the designer who was tasked to develop a new “corporate” identity for Qatar, noted that “Qatar did not have an existing national identity [something that] made [my job] easier.”[144]

Lastly, it must be noted that, as with Olins’ French example, a significant audience for the rebranding exercise is in fact internal. Here there is an interesting confluence of the ‘foreign policy’ aspects of the thesis and the other parts of the puzzle that have both an external and an internal dimension.

[140] Olins, "Branding the Nation - the Historical Context," p.246.
[141] Van Ham, "Place Branding: The State of the Art," p.4, 6.
[142] Paul Rockower, "Qatar's Public Diplomacy," (12 December 2008)
[143] Gilmore, "A Country Can It Be Repositioned? Spain - the Success Story of Country Branding," p.282.
[144] Shannon Mattern, "Font of a Nation: Creating a National Graphic Identity for Qatar," *Public Culture* 20, no. 3 (2008): p.480.

### *Soft power*

Inextricably linked to state branding is the concept of soft power. First espoused by Joseph Nye in the early 1990s (though its antecedents go back centuries),[145] it was a notion used to explain that the power of America rested not only on its superior hard power facilities (primarily its military) but on its soft power too; its ability to persuade states to follow an American path as opposed to threatening or coercing them to do so. Nye identified three broad fonts of soft power as stemming from culture, political values, and foreign policies.[146] Under this rubric he identified American educational institutions teaching numerous foreign leaders and future business people as well as American culture (via Hollywood, for example) familiarising people with American traits as two key fonts of US soft power.[147]

In the Qatari context it is suggested that many of the post-1995 policies can be seen as boosting Qatar's soft power. Indeed, two of Qatar's flagship undertakings post-1995 are the establishment of Al Jazeera satellite channel and the promotion of education through the establishment of US Educational Institutions in Doha, both mirroring America's twin traditional key fonts of its soft power: education and media projection. Moreover, sporting ventures are a central way for Qatar to not only publicise itself but to "reiterate its adhesion to the universal values of democracy, solidarity, and human rights," as one scholar put it regarding part of Qatar's reasons for hosting the 2006 Asian Games; a direct echo of Nye's point on the promotion of values and political culture as sources of soft power.[148]

For Qatar to pursue a soft power approach is an obvious if not necessary policy, for with a population of approximately 250,000 native Qataris, to pick just one limiting factor, Qatar will always struggle to project hard power. Yet Qatar can invest in activities and policies that boost another aspect of power and this is the context of, for example, Al Jazeera; a savvy, asymmetric use of financial power augment Qatar's soft power.

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[145] Joseph S. Nye, *The Future of Power* (Philadelphia: PA: Public Affairs, 2011), P.81.
[146] Ibid., p.84.
[147] *Soft Power : The Means to Success in World Politics*, p.33.
Carol Atkinson, "Does Soft Power Matter? A Comparative Analysis of Student Exchange Programs 1980–2006," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 6, no. 1.
[148] Mahfoud Amara, "2006 Qatar Asian Games: A 'Modernization' Project from Above?," in *Sport, Nationalism and Orientalism*, ed. Fan Hong (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), p.507.

Not only has soft power become a fixture of the international politics lexicon in recent decades despite difficulties in defining this intrinsically nebulous issue, but the concept of Qatar building its soft power capacities has become something of a trope in public writings on Qatar. Indeed, a wide variety of articles and analysis pieces in recent years have focused specifically upon Qatar's various fonts of soft power.[149]

[149] Eakin, "The Strange Power of Qatar."
Lawrence Rubin, "A Typology of Soft Powers in Middle East Politics," (The Dubai Initiative, December 2010).
Bill Law, "Jazz, the Soung of Soft Power in the Desert," *BBC News*(20 January 2013)
George Abraham, "Qatar Is a Diplomatic Heavy-Hitter," *Al Jazeera*(21 July 2008)

# Chapter 3: Qatar in Historical Context

## The Local Milieu

Before the mid-18th century there are few specific records of activity on the Qatari Peninsula with one Arab historian concluding that "its inhabitants led a peaceful life and confronted no major events thought worthy of historical recording."[150] The modern history of Qatar begins with the emigration of Utub tribes from Kuwait to the Qatar Peninsula in the 1760s.[151] Initially led by the Al Khalifah tribe, they planned to settle in Bahrain for its rich pearling beds but were prevented by tribes loyal to the Shah of Persia. Instead, they settled on Qatar's west coast. At this time the Al Musallam tribe held a "preeminent, though not a paramount position"[152] across Qatar, as Lorimer put it, while paying tribute to the Bani Khalid tribal conglomeration who controlled much of Hasa (eastern Saudi Arabia).[153] The Al Musallam demanded a tribute but were rebuffed and the Al Khalifah quickly built walls and defences, taking over the town of Zubarah.[154] As there was no recorded Musallam reaction one surmises that realising that they were outnumbered, the Al Musallam did not pursue this slight and retired to Huwailah and then Khor Hassan.[155]

Soon a dispute emerged among the Utub in Zubarah when the Al Jalahimah who followed the Al Khalifah from Kuwait began to ask for a larger share in profits.[156] The Al Khalifah refused and the Al Jalahimah retired to Ruwais east of Zubarah from where they successfully

[150] Al-Rashid, *Saudi Relations with Eastern Arabia and Oman, 1800-1870*, p.34.
[151] George Oman Rentz and Gulf the Southern shore of the Persian, *Oman and the South-Eastern Shore of Arabia* (Reading: Ithaca, 1997), p.170.
[152] John Gordon Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, vol. Volume 2, Part 2 (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, India, 1908), p.1534.
[153] Abu Hakima, *History of Eastern Arabia, 1750-1800 : The Rise and Development of Bahrain and Kuwait*, p.67.
[154] Though there is no evidence of the Al Khalifah evicting others from Zubarah, this is the only logical conclusion to draw. Ibid., p.70. Muhammad bin Khalifah Al Nabhani, *Al Tuhfah Al Nabhaniyah Fi Ta'rikh Al Jazirah Al Arabiyah* (Cairo: Al Matba'ah al Mahmudiyah, 1924), p.121. quoted in Al-Rashid, *Saudi Relations with Eastern Arabia and Oman, 1800-1870*, p.35.
[155] *Saudi Relations with Eastern Arabia and Oman, 1800-1870*, p.35; Rahman, *The Emergence of Qatar*, p.18. Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Volume 1, Part 1, p.787.
[156] Confusingly, they were previously known as the Al Jabir and are today known as the Al Nisf.

and persistently attacked Utubi shipping.[157] A battle ensued and the Al Jalahimah were comprehensively defeated.[158]

Zubarah developed incrementally until the great port of Basra was closed first by a devastating plague in 1773 and then by a Persian blockade from 1775-1779, which diverted traffic to other Gulf ports including Zubarah. With no taxes Zubarah blossomed. Persians, their proxies in Bahrain, and other local tribes attacked several times from 1777 to 1801. The Utub settled their differences and successfully defended Zubarah and then turned from defence into attack.

In conjunction with indigenous Qatari tribes the Utub evicted the Persians and those supporting them (the Qawasim and other local tribes) from Bahrain in 1782-3.[159] The Al Khalifah took control in Bahrain, but continued to rule from Zubarah, and apportioned out the loot. The Al Jalahimah felt slighted (again) at their allotted booty and, now twice spurned, became implacable enemies of the Al Khalifah. They returned to Qatar, settled at Khor Hassan and under the leadership of the notorious pirate Rahman bin Jabir attacked Utub shipping becoming "the scourge of the Al Khalifah."[160]

Aside from these emerging disputes, as with much of the rest of the region, Qatar was beset with intra-tribal belligerency. Much of this fighting followed the age-old *hadar-bedu* nexus; with the settled *hadar* suffering from "continual marauding inroads from their Bedouin [plural: *bedu*] neighbours, the Menaseer and the Al-Morrah [sic]" to name but two such tribes.[161]

Elsewhere in Eastern Arabia, the Wahhabis, hailing from deep within central Arabia, were overcoming the Bani Khalid, exposing the Utub to marauding raids from 1790 onwards. Not only did the Wahhabis want to control the rich town and spread their religious doctrine but Zubarah was developing a reputation as a refuge for those escaping Wahhabi domination

[157] Also transliterated as Reveish. Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Volume 1, Part 1, p.787.
[158] Warden, "Historical Sketch of the Uttoobee Tribe of Arabs (Bahrein) from the Year 1716 to the Year 1817," p.363. taken from Tuson, *Records of Qatar : Primary Documents 1820-1960*, p.5.
[159] Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, p.27.
[160] Lorimer quoted in Abu Hakima, *History of Eastern Arabia, 1750-1800 : The Rise and Development of Bahrain and Kuwait*, p.117.
[161] Palgrave, *Narrative of a Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia (1862-1863)*, Volume 2, p.233.

such as the Bani Khalid leaders.[162] With Al Jalahimah help and after attacking numerous towns across Qatar, the Wahhabis forced the Utub to relocate from Zubarah to Bahrain around 1797.[163] Qatar was left to "total subjugation...by the Su'udi state."[164]

The Utub were not safe in Bahrain, which was attacked in 1799 by the Sultan of Muscat. According to Warden, this prompted the Al Khalifah to pay a tribute to the Persians, presumably to elicit some kind of protection.[165] This was not successful and Muscat took Bahrain in 1800. Those that could escape fled back to Zubarah where they sought assistance from their erstwhile enemies, the Wahhabis, to regain control of Bahrain. Pleased to be offered the opportunity to extend their influence and attack their perennial enemy, Wahhabi forces joined the Utub to retake Bahrain. The Al Khalifah were reinstalled in Manama under a Wahhabi "tribal commonwealth" by 1802.[166]

In 1803 when the son of the Sultan of Muscat tried and failed to overthrow his father he sought refuge in Zubarah. Two years later with Wahhabi and Utub support he gained the throne in Muscat. Aside from this military aid, the Al Khalifah were far from diligent Wahhabi subjects.[167] They chafed under Wahhabi overlordship and sought ways to extract themselves from the relationship, including (unsuccessfully) seeking British help 1805.[168] After this failure the Al Khalifah refused to join the Wahhabi raiding party against Basra in 1809 and began to renege on sending tribute.[169] The next year the Wahhabis reasserted their control appointing Abdullah bin Ufaysan as *wakil* (deputy) deputy of Bahrain and Qatar reinforcing him with troops.[170] The Al Khalifah rulers were summoned to Diriyah, the Wahhabi capital, for reprimands as Ibrahim Pasha, the Ottoman General, advanced further into Wahhabi territory forcing the removal of Wahhabi troops from Hasa to reinforce against the Ottoman advances.

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[162] Rahman, *The Emergence of Qatar*, p.21.
[163] Abu Hakima, *History of Eastern Arabia, 1750-1800 : The Rise and Development of Bahrain and Kuwait*, p.158-9. Rahman, *The Emergence of Qatar*, p.22.
[164] Al-Rashid, *Saudi Relations with Eastern Arabia and Oman, 1800-1870*, p.37.
[165] Warden, "Historical Sketch of the Uttoobee Tribe of Arabs (Bahrein) from the Year 1716 to the Year 1817," p.366. in Tuson, *Records of Qatar : Primary Documents 1820-1960*, p.8.
[166] Al-Rashid, *Saudi Relations with Eastern Arabia and Oman, 1800-1870*, p.39.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Volume 1, Part 1, p.789.
[169] Al-Rashid, *Saudi Relations with Eastern Arabia and Oman, 1800-1870*, p.39.
[170] Warden, "Historical Sketch of the Uttoobee Tribe of Arabs (Bahrein) from the Year 1716 to the Year 1817," p.368. in Tuson, *Records of Qatar : Primary Documents 1820-1960*, p.10.

The Al Khalifah heirs, shorn of practically all powers, went to Muscat for help. Always eager to attack Wahhabis, Muscat took advantage of Egyptian advances down the Wahhabi western flank and destroyed Zubarah and took Bahrain in 1811, expelling the Wahhabis.[171] The Utub and the Sultan's forces held Ufaysan hostage to ensure the release of the Al Khalifah from Diriyah who were released on the optimistic understanding that they still acquiesced to Wahhabi overlordship. Additionally, Khor Hassan, a sanctuary for Qawasim pirates, a "gathering place for all anti Al Khalifah forces,"[172] and the lair of Rahman bin Jabir who was allied with the Wahhabis against the Utub and Muscat, was destroyed prompting him to flee to Dammam.[173]

With the Al Khalifah restored once again to the throne under Muscati aegis and the withdrawal of troops back to Oman, the ruling Utub enjoyed reasonable independence, despite nominal overlordship by both the Wahhabis and Muscat.

Following the set pattern, soon Muscat sought to re-exert more direct power over Bahrain. Rahman bin Jabir, always eager to side with an actor antagonistic to the Utub, joined in the Sultan's attack on Bahrain in 1815-6, yet their combined forces were defeated. This meant that "from this period forward the Utubis [sic]...maintained their rule over the islands."[174] Rahman's fort at Dammam was destroyed by the Wahhabis for his desertion and he fled to Bushehr.[175] By 1818, however, the first Wahhabi state was finished. The Ottomans from Egypt swept down sacking the Wahhabi capital (Diriyah) and extinguishing the Wahhabi threat to Qatar for nearly a century.

This detailed examination of half a century of Qatar's history continually highlights the constantly shifting nature of external alliances. To achieve their central goals the Al Khalifah and the Al Jalahimah, for example, quickly and frequently shifted alliances: an ally one day became the enemy the next and vice versa. As weaker actors in a region of larger, predatory powers, this was the only alternative open to them. Though the Al Thani were yet to emerge

[171] Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Volume 1, Part 1, p.790. Warden, "Historical Sketch of the Uttoobee Tribe of Arabs (Bahrein) from the Year 1716 to the Year 1817," p.368; Tuson, *Records of Qatar : Primary Documents 1820-1960*, p.10.
[172] Rahman, *The Emergence of Qatar*, p.24-5.
[173] Ibid., p.24. Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, p.122.
[174] Saldanha, *Precis of Bahrein Affairs 1854-1904*, Vol. IV, p.1.
[175] Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Volume 1, Part 1, p.792.

in Qatar, this is the milieu in which they were brought-up, socialised, educated, and in which they lived. One of the few notes in Arabic or English on Muhammad Al Thani, one of the first mentioned Al Thani sheikhs, notes that he "was aware of the balance of power in the eastern part of the Arabian peninsula," according to one Qatari scholar.[176] This kind of alliance-swapping to which this is referring was not unique to Qatar but is a feature of the politics on the Peninsula. What is relatively unique to Qatar is the combination of the number of actors seeking influence on the Peninsula and the initial lack of any hegemonic figure in the Peninsula itself. As Palgrave evocatively noted, this meant that Qatar's *hadar* towns were continually subject to harsh depredations of wanton, vicious and frequent *bedu* attack.[177] Also this lack of authority meant that Qatar developed a well-earned reputation as a haven for exiles, pirates, and undesirables of all sorts.

[176] Yousof Ibrahim Abdulla, *A Study of Qatari-British Relations, 1914-1945* (Doha : Orient Publishing & Translation, 1981), p.16.

[177] Palgrave, *Narrative of a Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia (1862-1863)*, Volume 2, pp.231-53.

The *hadar* versus the *bedouin (bedu)* is a central feature of life on the Arabian Peninsula. The *hadar* are the settled inhabitants, who made a living from trade, agriculture, or pearling. The *bedouin* are the roaming nomadic tribes that so often raided the *hadar* towns.

## The British and the Ottomans

Prompted by rising piracy threatening commercial shipping interests and a desire to protect Britain's Indian 'frontiers,' Britain increased its interaction in the Gulf as the 19th century progressed.[178] In addition to suppressing what Britain considered to be piratical attacks in the early 19th century, the UK instituted a series of maritime truces, which were first formalised in 1853. At this stage Qatar was assumed to be under the control of the Al Khalifah in Bahrain.[179] The first significant British interaction with Qatar occurred in 1821 when the East Indian Company's brig *Vestal* destroyed Al Bida (the nominal Qatari capital) for harbouring piratical elements.[180] When Lieutenant Macleod visited Al Bida in 1823 he discovered that those there knew "very little of the conditions of the treaty" though he still considered Qatar to be "entirely a subject of Bahrein [sic]."[181]

Despite Macleod explaining the treaty to those in Al Bida and reminding the Al Khalifah of their duties, absconding elements, fugitives, and pirates continued to reside in Qatari towns. Disaffected Sheikhs from Abu Dhabi,[182] the deposed Abu Dhabi leader Muhammad bin Shakhbut,[183] the notorious outlaw Jassem bin Jabr Raqraqi, numerous pirates,[184] and countless manoeuvring Sheikhs from Bahrain[185] all sought protection or at least boarding at towns in Qatar.[186] Eventually, despite sporadic attempts by individual Sheikhs to curb such characters, Qatar's continued renegade reputation led to the British bombardment of Al Bida in 1841.[187] Clearly, there was no kind of meaningful overarching authority in Qatar; not only could the British not find such an authority with whom to discuss the situation but had there been one it would seem logical that they would have used their control to avoid incurring the wrath of the powerful British. Similarly, the apparent abrogation of practical

[178] J. E. Peterson, "Britain and the Gulf," in *The Persian Gulf in History*, ed. Lawrence G. Potter (New York ; Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p.279.
[179] Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Volume 1, Part 1, p.671.
[180] Al Bida and Doha were separate places though today, Al Bida has been subsumed in Doha.
[181] J.A. Saldanha, "Affairs of the Persian Gulf: Lieutenant Macleod's Report; 1823," in *Persian Gulf Gazetteer - Precis of correspondance regarding the affairs of the Persian Gulf, 1801-1853* (Calcutta1906). In Tuson, *Records of Qatar : Primary Documents 1820-1960*, P.597.
[182] Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Volume 1, Part 1, p.796.
[183] Ibid., p.795.
[184] Ibid., p.786-7. Rahman, *The Emergence of Qatar*, p.42, 47.
[185] Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, pp.36-7.
[186] Rentz and the Southern shore of the Persian, *Oman and the South-Eastern Shore of Arabia*, p.174.
[187] Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, p.36. Rentz and the Southern shore of the Persian, *Oman and the South-Eastern Shore of Arabia*, p.48.

responsibility by Bahraini leaders suggests that they too had, in effect, little control over Qatar.

The first time that an Al Thani is mentioned in British records is on 27 March 1841 when Muhammad Bin Thani is requested not to host absconding or criminal elements in his town of Fuwairit.[188] At this time the Al Thani were nominally the ruling Sheikhs over parts of eastern and northern Qatar who collected tribute from local Sheikhs and passed it to the Al Khalifah.[189] However, as per the norm in the region, Al Thani leaders were perpetually struggling for increasing independence of action and playing one ruler off against the other. In this case, Muhammad Bin Thani sought protection from Amir Faisal of Najd against the Al Khalifah. In reaction to these moves, Muhammad Bin Khalifah of Bahrain and Sheikh Zayed Bin Khalifah of Abu Dhabi launched an attack on Al Bida and Al Wakra in 1867, breaking their covenant with the British not to undertake such attacks.[190]

The British political resident, Colonel Pelly, reacted strongly to this violation of British Treaties. He removed Muhammad bin Khalifah from power in Bahrain for undertaking the attack and demanded reparations for the victims. On 13 September 1868 Pelly formally signed a treaty with Muhammad Bin Thani as the leader of "all residing in the province of Qatar" but still under Al Khalifah rule.[191] A complex series of tribute payments was then arranged. Essentially, the Al Thani would collect local tribute and pay the Al Naim tribe in Qatar (who were loyal to the Al Khalifah) not to attack Al Bida from the west in addition to paying the Al Khalifah who would in turn pay the Wahhabis not to attack from the south.[192]

This arrangement lasted barely two years and examples of perennial *hadar-bedu* conflict and of the desire to forever jockey for greater autonomy far too numerous to mention here

[188] Rahman, *The Emergence of Qatar*, p.48.
[189] Rentz and the Southern shore of the Persian, *Oman and the South-Eastern Shore of Arabia*, p.177.
[190] Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, p.42.
[191] Rentz and the Southern shore of the Persian, *Oman and the South-Eastern Shore of Arabia*, p.178.
Onley, "The Politics of Protection in the Gulf: The Arab Rulers and the British Resident in the Nineteenth Century," p.55.
[192] "The Politics of Protection in the Gulf: The Arab Rulers and the British Resident in the Nineteenth Century," p.55-6.

continued unabated.[193] Even the arrival of the Ottomans, a land-based power, did little to interrupt this immutable fact of life on the Qatari Peninsula.

The Ottomans had two eras of interaction with the Arabian Peninsula. The first was prompted largely by Portuguese expansion and began in 1517 with the taking of Mecca and Medina.[194] By 1538 they reached Aden and by 1550 exercised power over Hasa, Saudi Arabia's eastern province. Technically, Qatar was under Ottoman jurisdiction at this time, though there is no evidence of any actual interaction or control being exerted.[195]

By the mid-seventeenth century the Ottomans were becoming ever more marginalised as pressure on other flanks of their Empire forced them to remove troops from the region. Yemen and Hasa were lost though the maintenance of fortifications along the Syria-Hajj route maintained vestigial notions of "an active policy of retaining...[a] hold on territory."[196]

The second era of Ottoman interaction began in the 1870s, precipitated by fear of the expanding British role in the region.[197] In 1871 the Ottomans expanded control from the Hijaz to Asir, north of Sana'a, and the *Vali* of Baghdad sent an expedition south occupying Hasa. The Ottomans decided to bring Qatar under their control as in addition to Qatar again being used as a safe-haven for trouble-makers (on this occasion the Wahhabi leader), "hordes of Bedouins" were harassing the Ottoman troops stationed in adjoining Hasa.[198]

A deputation was sent to Qatar in 1871. Qasim bin Muhammad Al Thani (hereafter known as Jassim[199]), had taken over from his father Mohammed who had retired, accepted four Turkish flags as a sign of loyalty to the Porte in July 1871. One flew above his house, Muhammad Bin Thani (grudgingly) flew another and the last two went to the furthest

[193] For a thorough – if still not exhaustive – list of intra-tribal conflicts see Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Volume 1, Part 1, pp.787-835.
[194] Joao Teles e Cunha, "The Portuguese Presence in the Persian Gulf," in *The Persian Gulf in History*, ed. Lawrence G. Potter (New York ; Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pps.211-2.
Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.24.
[195] Kursun, *The Ottomans in Qatar : A History of Anglo-Ottoman Conflicts in the Persian Gulf* p.34.
[196] Andrew Petersen, "The Ottoman Conquest of Arabia and the Syrian Hajj Route," in *The Frontiers of the Ottoman World*, ed. A. C. S. Peacock (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p.93.
[197] For a detailed study of the reasons behind the Ottoman 1870 onwards push into Arabia see Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf : The Creation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar*, chapter 2.
[198] Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Volume 1, Part 1, p.803.
[199] Although in Arabic قاسم is understandably transliterated as Qasim, popular usage today has instead changed the name to Jassim.

reaches of their power, to Khor Al Shaqiq in the north and Khor Al Udeid in the south. The acceptance of Ottoman suzerainty was primarily a way for the Al Thani to sever their tribute relationship with the Al Khalifah in Bahrain and to loosen Britain's control of their maritime matters.[200]

Additionally, at the request of Jassim and Muhammad Bin Thani, in January 1872 100 Ottoman troops and a field gun were dispatched to Al Bida to defend against Wahhabi forces that without being paid a tribute were liberated to raid Qatar once more.[201] Some of these troops were replaced by just fifty gendarmes after only two years, perhaps because Qatar was too impoverished to pay for their upkeep.[202] By 1875, only four years after the Ottomans arrived, the Assistant British Resident in the region, Lieutenant Fraser, noted that the Al Thanis were already chafing under the Ottomans, but too afraid of deportation to Constantinople to voice their concerns.[203]

Aware of these feelings through their administrative staff in Doha, the Ottomans made Jassim *Kaymakam* (governor) of Qatar in 1879. This honorary title conferred status and enhanced his position in Qatar but also fostered problems. Some tribes denounced him and left Doha to start other settlements nearby, while sporadically harassing or attacking Doha. While there had never been any kind of peace in Qatar, for tribes were always skirmishing and there were perpetual conflicts with Bahrain and Abu Dhabi, the pace of altercations increased in the 1880s with raids, counter-raids, and piratical attacks.[204] The British sought to cajole Jassim to take a firmer line with piracy in his waters to which he replied that he

[200] Onley, "The Politics of Protection in the Gulf: The Arab Rulers and the British Resident in the Nineteenth Century," p.56.
Rentz and the Southern shore of the Persian, *Oman and the South-Eastern Shore of Arabia*, p.181.
[201] Rahman, *The Emergence of Qatar*, pps.95-6. & Kursun, *The Ottomans in Qatar : A History of Anglo-Ottoman Conflicts in the Persian Gulf* p.61. Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Volume 1, Part 1, p.803.
[202] The record is not wholly consistent regarding the numbers of troops. While Lorimer suggests that all 150 were withdrawn and replaced by Gendarmes, by early 1880 their numbers had seemingly grown again to 130. *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Volume 1, Part 1, p.803, 05. Saldana is more specific, citing that in 1873 the troops were replaced by 'zapiths' or 'gendarmes'. Saldanha, *Precis of Katar Affairs 1873-1904*, IV, p.31.
[203] Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Volume 1, Part 1, p.804; ibid.
[204] Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf : The Creation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar*, p.86-7. Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Volume 1, Part 1, p.804-5.

only controlled Wakra and Doha and could not be held responsible for other towns in Qatar.[205] A convenient excuse, for sure, but with an element of truth to it.

Subsequently, the Ottoman relationship with Jassim ebbed and flowed. While their goals occasionally coalesced such as with their desire to extend Jassim's control over towns on the south east and the west of the Qatar Peninsula, relations soon soured particularly after the Ottomans refused to support Jassim to avenge the death of one of his sons who was killed in battle. [206] In protest, Jassim attempted to resign the title of *Kaymakam* and allowed – if not encouraged – Doha to fall into disrepair.[207]

Indeed, Jassim was becoming increasingly difficult for the Ottomans. After receiving a number of substantiated complaints about his "abuses and oppression" in Qatar and his apparent encouragement of unrest in Doha and Hasa, in 1893 the *Wali* of Basra went to Doha to confront Jassim and to remind him of his duties as a subject of the Porte.[208] On the arrival of the *Vali* with a support column of 900 troops and 100 cavalry, Jassim retreated to the desert three days journey from Al Bida fearing he would be deposed.[209] He refused to return to Doha for talks, which were instead conducted through his brother Ahmed. In the meantime Jassim asked the British for protection, but was rebuffed. He even asked his recent enemy, the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, for some kind of protection, proving once again just how quickly alliances changed.[210]

After a month of waiting, the *Vali* imprisoned Ahmed and a score of Doha's leading nobles to punish Jassim and to scupper any ideas of a surprise attack on him and his troops.[211] He sent Ottoman troops to Wajbah, the village where Jassim had retreated, but the troops were surprisingly defeated by Jassim's forces. After retreating to Doha the Ottomans were surrounded in the keep and had their water supply cut off. Only after Jassim humiliated the *Vali* by forcing him to appeal for the safe return of his men and the cancellation of all

[205] *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Volume 1, Part 1, p.809.
[206] Saldanha, *Precis of Katar Affairs 1873-1904*, IV, p.37, 8.
[207] Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Volume 1, Part 1, p.806.
[208] Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf : The Creation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar*, p.87. & Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, pps.51-53.
[209] Saldanha, *Precis of Katar Affairs 1873-1904*, IV, p.38.
[210] Ibid., p.39.
[211] Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf : The Creation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar*, p.88.

outstanding charges and debts were the troops allowed to leave the fort unharmed. Today, this is understood as a watershed event in Qatar's history, cementing Jassim's status as a great leader of Qataris.

In the aftermath of the improbable defeat of the Ottomans at Wajbah in 1893, Britain saw a chance to intervene and advance their cause. Initially, British representatives tentatively sought the local *Vali's* permission to act as an intermediary but were rebuffed. The British resident, always somewhat bolder than Whitehall, nevertheless went to see Jassim personally. Jassim asked for British protection to remain in Qatar, the right to abdicate from his role as leader and for his brother Ahmed to take over.[212] Ahmed as the proposed new ruler even suggested they would be willing to pay off the Ottomans if they demanded reparations for leaving Qatar. The British took this suggestion to Istanbul but it was rejected.

At the very end of the 19th century a crisis emerged between the two Empires which nearly ended in a direct confrontation and which precipitated a clear expansion of Al Thani territory to the west coast of the peninsula. In 1895 some agitating tribes from Bahrain – a British territory – along with Jassim decided to rebuild the destroyed town of Zubarah. The British reacted quickly and angrily to what they perceived to be a direct threat to Bahrain. Despite severe warnings to desist from building any such development, Jassim, with Ottoman support, ignored the British even saying, "if I do not get from you the assistance and cooperation...I shall leave Katr [sic] to its owners [the Ottomans] and save myself the troubles [from preserving security]."[213] Clearly, this is a stark example of Jassim trying to manipulate overtly the British into supporting him.

A small settlement was built, manned by six Ottoman soldiers with their flag fluttering overhead; the Ottoman goals being momentarily aligned with Jassim's. The British despatched their nearest gunboat to the area to demand that it be destroyed. After some retaliatory confiscating of boats by the British and Ottomans, when the British commander

[212] Rahman, *The Emergence of Qatar*, p.113.
[213] Sheikh Jassim to British representative correspondence, unnumbered, 26 April 1895, R/15/1/314 quoted in ibid., pps.126-7.

feared that an invasion of Bahrain was imminent, he destroyed all boats in the harbour. Despite fierce threats to retaliate, the Ottoman and native forces in Zubarah did nothing.[214]

One result of this conflagration was that the British restated their demand that forces of the Al Khalifah must desist from interfering with Zubarah: "an implicit recognition of the rights of the Al Thani in Zubarah."[215] Also, Jassim was able to convince members of the Al Naim tribe in that area to switch their allegiance from the Al Khalifah to him, further strengthening the Qatari claim to Zubarah.[216] Lastly, angry at the Ottomans for their inaction in Zubarah, for a third time Jassim sought and failed to receive British protection against the Ottomans. These incidents prompted the Ottomans to reinforce their fort in Doha, to send another gunboat to local waters, and provoked the British to appoint a permanent political resident to Bahrain. Nevertheless, by this time, specifically after their humiliation in 1893, Ottoman rule was clearly in its decline. The murder of an Ottoman official in 1894 and rioting killing several more in 1898 demonstrably signalled a severe lack of respect for the Porte.[217]

Around this time a battle was emerging to the west. The Al Rashid house, which was trying to resurrect something approximating the defunct Wahhabi state, clashed against Wahhabi descendants. In 1897 Abdulrahman, the latest pretender, fled from the Wahhabi capital in Riyadh to Kuwait with his son Abdul-Aziz Ibn Abdulrahman Al Saud. This son – Ibn Saud – as he would be known recaptured Riyadh by 1902 and began to regain former Wahhabi territory. These moves heaped further pressures on the Ottomans across Hasa. Though the Ottomans sought to reinforce their numbers by sending representatives to Wakra, Zubarah, and Udaid in 1902 and 1903, though one did arrive, the British persuaded Istanbul to withdraw them: again, this seems like a token gesture by the Ottomans with little conviction.[218] Istanbul continued to attempt to install governors to towns in Qatar to solidify and extend their control. However, these attempts were notable, as Anscombe notes, for

[214] Ibid., p.137.
[215] Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, p.50.
[216] Ibid., p.51.
[217] Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia*, Volume 1, Part 1, p.312.
[218] Ibid., p.353-4.

their "total lack of effect."[219] The British Secretary of State summed up the Ottoman position in Qatar when he noted in a secret communication that:

> although they [the Ottomans] maintain a garrison at Bida, [they] appear to have practically no hold on the country. So long as they do not move beyond the limits of the town, the nominal suzerainty of the Porte is recognised; but any attempt to extend Turkish authority is resisted.[220]

When in 1902 the Wahhabis consolidated their rule for the third and final time, Jassim welcomed this development, even embracing their stricter religious stance "by conviction" and sending them tribute.[221] After victory over Ibn Rashid in Riyadh, Ibn Saud immediately contacted the Ottomans to assure them that he only wished to regain his heritage lands and his desire was not to then begin attacking Ottoman positions.[222] He felt that the Saudi position still fighting the Rashidis was tenuous and feared an Ottoman attack which had, after all, ended his ancestors' kingdoms. Moreover, Ibn Saud sought British help against the Ottomans and Goldberg notes eleven such overtures to the UK in twelve years.[223]

The British, not wanting to involve themselves in inner Arabia, ignored many such overtures. Ibn Saud therefore became bolder. In 1905, while visiting Qatar on a tour to "explore the country belonging to my [sic] father and grandfather" he affected a resolution of a dispute between Jassim and tribes residing within Qatar; the Al Murrah, the Bani Hajir, and the Ajman.[224] As Goldberg notes, in doing so he clearly assumed "the role of a sovereign...[treating] them as his subjects."[225] Ibn Saud also addressed a letter to the Trucial chiefs "announcing his visit to Qatar and expressing his intention of visiting the sheikhs' territories in the spring of 1906 "to look into certain affairs."[226] Clearly, Ibn Saud was tentatively seeking to assert his authority over the coastal Sheikhdoms and waiting to see what the British reaction would be.

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[219] Anscombe, *The Ottoman Gulf : The Creation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar*, p.148.
[220] Quoted in Saldanha, *Precis of Katar Affairs 1873-1904*, IV, p.41.
[221] Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, p.54.
[222] Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia : The Formative Years, 1902-1918*, p.48.
[223] Ibid., pp.50-80.
[224] Ibn Saud quoted in ibid., p.66.
[225] Ibid., p.67.
[226] Ibid.

The British were perturbed by these events. After some deliberation and consultation, via Mubarak the Great in Kuwait, they sent a stern message to Ibn Saud warning him not to interfere in the coastal Sheikhdoms. Neither wanting a war with the British nor losing them as an Ottoman 'counter-balance,' Ibn Saud backed-down.[227]

At this stage, regarding Qatar, the British Government was still unwilling to offer Jassim protection even though Jassim was seeking assurances given the growing Saudi pressure. Though discussions took place, the Foreign Office still refused to offer protection for fear of irritating the Ottoman status quo.

As the first decade of the twentieth century progressed, the inevitable Saudi-Ottoman clash began to increasingly go in favour of the former. By 1907 Ibn Saud managed to evict Ottoman forces from Nejd. By 1913 he occupied Hasa in the hope that this would finally induce enough interest from the British to come to some workable agreement for coexistence. Even though the Government in Bombay and local residents pressed London to deal with Ibn Saud, with the Political Resident musing that "I have not a doubt that Bin Saud could eat up Qatar in a week and I am rather afraid that he may do so,"[228] the cautious and conservative "brick wall" of the Foreign Office refused.[229] Therefore, in July 1913 Ibn Saud sought to further apprise the British of the new realities in Eastern Arabia when he demanded that Abdullah bin Jassim Al Thani, who took over following the death of his father, evict the Turkish garrison in Bida if he were to retain his 'friendship.'[230]

Concurrently in 1913 the Ottoman Grand Vazir, Hakki Pasha, had been in London finalising negotiations for the Ottoman withdrawn from Arabia. On 29 July 1913 the Anglo-Ottoman Convention was signed - though never ratified - which allowed for the withdrawal of Ottoman troops from Qatar. A brief attempt by Bahrain to reinstitute a tribute from the Qatari Sheikhs was quickly put down under Article 10 of the treaty.

Now with more room to manoeuvre, Britain instituted friendlier relations with Ibn Saud, not least because the Foreign Office was belatedly aware of his latent potential. After difficult

[227] Ibid., p.69.
[228] Quoted by Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, p.59.
[229] Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia : The Formative Years, 1902-1918*, p.90.
[230] Rahman, *The Emergence of Qatar*, p.216.

negotiations during which Ibn Saud tried to coerce if not outright threaten the British into supporting him against the Ottomans, he finally agreed to:

> Refrain from all aggression on, or interference with the territories of Kuwait, Bahrain, and of the Sheikhs of Qatar and the Oman Coast, who are under the protection of the British Government, and who have treaty relations with the said Government.[231]

A new era was dawning for Qatar. Gone were the Ottomans and the controlling hand of the Al Khalifah. Now the resurgent Wahhabis and the British were the two actors of prime importance once again as the Al Thani continued their perennial search for suitable suzerains to offer security guarantees without overly onerous attached conditions.

The beginning of the Great War ended negotiations with the Ottomans and allowed the Foreign Office to make an offer of a protection treaty to Qatar. The flight of the Turkish garrison from Al Bida by 19 August 1915 removed any lingering difficulties and the half-century Ottoman occupation was over.

After negotiations Qatar was enveloped into the web of British Protectorate Treaties on 03 November 1916, joining the Trucial States. It is interesting to note, however, that several articles (VII, VIII & IX) were omitted from the Treaty that Abdullah Bin Jassim signed including one regarding the ruler's necessity of protecting British citizens in his charge as he felt that he did not have sufficient control of Qatar to make such guarantees.[232]

No delineation of Qatar's territory was included at this stage, as the pro-Bahrain historian Jawad Al Arayed demonstrates.[233] He notes that up until 1934, the Qatari leader assumed that the Treaty only covered control of the coastal areas of Qatar, clearly insinuating that he had little (if any) control of the interior: a reasonable conclusion.[234] Additionally, Al Arayed quotes numerous British officials showing exceedingly little confidence in the Sheikh's ability

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[231] Charles U. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads, Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries*, [5th ed.] ed. (Calcutta: Superintendent Govt. Printing, India, 1929). Quoted in Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, p.59.
[232] *The Creation of Qatar*, p.60.
[233] Al Arayed, *A Line in the Sea : The Qatar Versus Bahrain Border Dispute in the World Court*, pp.98-102. Though Al Arayed clearly writes with an anti-Qatari bias, in the examples used here, he is referring to verifiable examples.
[234] Ibid., p.100.

to exert control outwith Doha-Bida or even in the likelihood of Qatar surviving at all, such was the threat they feared from the proto-Saudi Arabia.

> I [the British Political Resident] think it would be a pity if Qatar disappeared as a separate entity; from our point of view it is convenient to have the rulers of the coastal districts on the coast, but I do not see any practical means of preventing peaceful penetration of the country by…Bin Saud's adherents.[235]

The Qatari-British 1916 agreement, therefore, nominally went further than others. Thanks in part to Abdullah Bin Jassim's laborious negotiations he was offered 'good offices' should be he attacked. However, there were subsequent disagreements as to what this meant. This apparent 'extra' offered by London along with Abdullah Bin Jassim being accorded the title CIE in 1919 and being the only Trucial State Sheikh to receive a seven gun salute, led Rahman to deduce Abdullah Bin Jassim was "the most important ruler in the region...after the First World War."[236] This, however, is clearly not the case.

Qatar at this stage still had no intrinsic worth to the British, aside from that fact that if it was nominally under the control of the British it was not under the sway of someone else. Indeed, it is questionable whether Abdullah Bin Jassim could even marshal support along his coastline to prevent piracy: the fundamental reason as to why the British involved themselves with the local proto-states in the region in the first place.

As Abdullah Bin Jassim was to discover when he sought clarification, not only were the British concessions relatively minor, but their guarantees were in fact disingenuous. The notion of the British offering 'good offices' transpired to mean relatively little, as an India Office Memorandum made clear: "[the pledge on offices]...did not...in practice impose any very serious liability on His Majesty's Government."[237] This lack of substantive support in the event of an attack was made clear in 1921 with a discussion with the Political Resident.[238] Nor would the British intervene were an Al Thani challenger to usurp Abdullah Bin Jassim, something that was looking increasingly likely. Indeed, not only was Ibn Saud "courting"

[235] Quoted in ibid.
[236] Rahman, *The Emergence of Qatar*, p.227.
[237] Quoted in Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, p.61.
[238] Ibid., p.62. It is also interesting to note that these misunderstandings still occur today. One high-level interviewee remarked that Britain had significant problems with one Gulf State as to the interpretation of a modern defence treaty.

disaffected Al Thanis but various coastal villages were reneging on paying tribute to Abdullah Bin Jassim at the behest, and the Political Resident believed, of Ibn Saud.[239]

To these pleas for support in the face of serious pressures, the British would not supply Abdullah Bin Jassim with guns; permit him to attack recalcitrant coastal villages; guarantee that his son alone would be recognised as his successor or promise any sea-borne protection: hardly the way to treat their 'most valuable ally in the Middle East.' The weak state of Abdullah Bin Jassim and the lack of any meaningful British protection meant that he paid a tribute of some Rs.100,000 (approximated $30,000) per year to Ibn Saud to stay his hand.[240] Even then Ibn Saud reputedly only accepted that the towns belonged to Qatar; the desert belonged to him.[241]

When Britain asked for the Royal Air Force (RAF) to open an emergency landing-strip in Qatar, a chased and obstreperous Abdullah Bin Jassim demanded meaningful protection assurances in return. When a tentative agreement was reached, he pulled out at the last minute citing that as the agreement was not signed by the Viceroy of India, he would not agree. As Zahlan notes, clearly he was wary of signing an ineffectual agreement, just as he had done in 1916.[242] It is as this point when, as mentioned earlier, the British Political Resident noted that it would be "a shame" were Qatar to cease to exist. This accurately sums up the official attitude towards Qatar: CIE and seven-gun salutes notwithstanding – nice baubles to impress a local Sheikh – it just was not that important. There were no strategically important bases, towns, commodities, markets, or people present.

This calculus was to change in the 1930s with the dawning of the age of oil on the Gulf's Western shores, some thirty years behind the first Middle East oil concession granted by the Persian Government to William Knox D'Arcy in 1901.[243]

In Persia it took another seven years and an injection of funds from the Burmah Oil Company for commercial quantities of oil to be found. This resulted in, as Longrigg

[239] Political Agent, "Confidential Memo from the Political Agency Bahrain to the Political Resident Bushire," in *R/15/2/79*, ed. India Office Records (3rd November 1922).
[240] Crystal, *Oil and Politics in the Gulf : Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar*, p.115.
[241] Michael Field, *The Merchants: The Big Business Families of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States* (Woodstock, NY: The Overlook Press, 1985), p.196.
[242] Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, p.65.
[243] Mikdashi, *A Financial Analysis of Middle Eastern Oil Concessions: 1901-1965*, p.12.

somewhat bombastically puts it, “one of the most significant events in all Persian history.”[244] This find led directly to the founding of the Anglo-Persian Oil (APOC) in 1909. Under the auspices of a range of companies, concessions followed in Iraq (1925, 1932 & 1938), Saudi Arabia (1933), Kuwait (1934), Bahrain (1934), and Qatar (1935).[245] The Qatar agreement was many years in the making.

In 1930 a representative of APOC acting on behalf of Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) arrived in Doha and secured rights for a geological examination of Qatar.[246] Now, however, Abdullah Bin Jassim was more aware of the position he was in after hearing about agreements between Ibn Saud and American oil company Californian Standard Oil Company (SOCAL) which offered better financial terms. This newfound confidence and his continuing mistrust of the British – or the fact that he was “senile and suspicious” according to Longrigg – led to long-winded negotiations.[247]

By May 1935 a new 75-year agreement was finally signed giving exploration rights to ‘all’ of Qatar even though its borders were not set. Abdullah Bin Jassim secured from APOC/IPC Rs.400,000 for his signature then Rs.150,000 every year rising to Rs.300,000 after five years plus royalties.[248] Indeed, he was described as a ‘Pearl King’ and “one of the richest Sheikhs in the world” by the Daily Express, commenting on his visit to London for the Silver Jubilee.[249] From the British Government he procured explicit agreements of protection from the RAF, extra weapons, an armoured car, and acknowledgement of his son as the legitimate heir.

Due to Qatar’s profound state of underdevelopment, it was some time before drilling could begin with the first well being spudded in October 1938. Oil was found at the very end of 1939 and the first well completed in 1940. A second well 10 miles south found oil soon after but the Second World War precluded any exports as the wells were cemented up and

[244] Longrigg, "Oil in the Middle East ... Second Edition. [with Maps.]," p.19.
[245] Cattan, *The Evolution of Oil Concessions in the Middle East and North Africa*, p.1,2.
[246] See Longrigg for an excellent overall view of the trends of oil concessions in the greater Middle East. Longrigg, "Oil in the Middle East ... Second Edition. [with Maps.]; Shwadran, *The Middle East : Oil and the Great Powers*, p.431.
[247] Longrigg, "Oil in the Middle East ... Second Edition. [with Maps.]," p.105.
[248] Ibid., p.106.
[249] Quoted in Fay Jacqueline Gotting, "History of Medicine in Qatar" (University of Glasgow, 1995), p.24.

equipment was moved to Bombay and Basra for fear that "enemy war activity might envelop the Persian Gulf."[250]

With the lack of oil exports, the decimation of Qatar's traditional pearling industry in the 1920s and 1930s, food shortages causes by Japan overrunning fertile, rice producing areas in South East Asia and warfare spreading to sea routes sinking food-carrying ships, Qatar struggled severely. Indeed, some estimates suggest that up to a third of the population emigrated from 1939-1945 leaving only 10,000 on the Peninsula.[251]

After the war painstaking rehabilitation was needed. Again, all equipment (100,000 tonnes of it) and expertise and most of the surrounding infrastructure had to be imported before exports could begin.[252] This nascent industry was almost the only meaningful employer in Qatar such that "almost everyone who had any significant income at all in the later 1940s drew it from the oil company; for five days of the week the entire life of Doha seemed to drain away to Dukhan, the oil-company town on the other side of the peninsula."[253] Oil did not flow until late 1947 from the newly named Dukhan Field and was not exported until the end of 1949 aboard the President Meny after the construction of a cross-Qatar pipeline to Doha and a sea-loading terminal.[254] Further exploration of Qatar ensued. At this early stage Qatar's oil reserves were estimated to be some 1.5 billion barrels of oil.[255]

It is important to note that the Qatari Peninsula was encroached upon "at least once" by ARAMCO geologists under Saudi guard to test for oil.[256] By the 1930s Ibn Saud's power was consolidated and he was the assured King of a country the size of Western Europe. Just at it had done regularly throughout its history, Saudi Arabia, as it was known, towered over Qatar and strove to dictate events on the Peninsula.

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[250] Hamilton, *Americans and Oil in the Middle East*, p.100.
[251] Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, p.96.
Field, *The Merchants: The Big Business Families of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States*, p.205.
[252] Melamid, "Political Geography of Trucial 'Oman and Qatar," p.202.
[253] Field, *The Merchants: The Big Business Families of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States*, p.210.
[254] Longrigg, "Oil in the Middle East ... Second Edition. [with Maps.]," p.227. & Hamilton, *Americans and Oil in the Middle East*, p.101.
[255] Shwadran, *The Middle East : Oil and the Great Powers*, p.432.
[256] Longrigg, "Oil in the Middle East ... Second Edition. [with Maps.]," p.228.

Ibn Saud used close relations with the Al Murrah tribe some of whom lived in central Qatar yet from whom he still received a tribute as one way of interfering with Abdullah Bin Jassim's rule to the extent that Ibn Saud saw "Al Murrah country as necessarily his" as the Political Resident noted.[257] Abdullah Bin Jassim also feared "more subtle methods" of Ibn Saud's influence such as inciting numerous small rebellions in villages whereby they would refuse to pay tribute or ignore his summons.

The British, despite being preeminent in their Gulf Lake continued their pessimistic take on Qatar and Ibn Saud with one Resident noting that "We [the British] hold the front door to these principalities...but we do not hold the back door."[258] In short, Abdullah Bin Jassim's continued rule and control in Qatar was largely due to his on-going tribute payment and Ibn Saud's acquiescence and fear of potential British reprisals were he to act aggressively against Qatar.

As Qatar and Saudi Arabia were represented by different oil companies, tensions to draw their boundaries necessarily increased. This was a novel problem. Oil concessions marked the first time in the region's history that specifically demarcated 'Westphalian' borders had to be agreed upon. Previously one's territory was simply as far as one could extract tribute from roaming or settled tribes: it moved.[259] Though physical features such as oases or rivers were nominally used as defining features, the notion of borders; fixed, somewhat arbitrary imaginary lines on a putative map are simply not traditionally found in the Arabian lexicon. Before this scramble for borders ensued, Sir Olaf Caroe predicted the key future zero-sum problem:

> This uncertainty of frontiers will lead to trouble should oil be found in Trucial limits of east Qatar. There will be a scramble to assert and establish rights over land which may be disputed between two

[257] Political Resident, "Secret Telegram from the Political Resident to the Secretary of State for India," in *IOR/L/P&S/12/3848*, ed. India Office Records (30th August 1935).
For a more anthropological look at the Al Murrah see Robert L Headley, "People of the Camel," *Aramco World* 15, no. 5 (September/October 1964).
[258] Quoted in Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar*, p.81.
[259] John C. Wilkinson, "Traditional Concepts of Territory in South East Arabia," *The Geographical Journal* 149, no. 3 (1983).

> or more Sheikhs or tribes...[which] may have been worthless up to that point. The worst instincts of the tribesmen may then have full play. [260]

When it came to delineating the borders between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, Ibn Saud was predictably vehement. He refused the first British overture suggesting the adoption of what became known as the 1913 blue line. The Saudi Foreign Minister Fuad Hamza counter proposed a Red (or Fuad) line incorporating more of what today is Qatar and the UAE, but this was rejected out outright. The British Minister in Jeddah, Sir Andrew Ryan, proposed the Green line. This was rejected by Saudi Arabia. At a 1935 conference on the topic a revised Ryan line was proposed which offered concessions to Ibn Saud. Despite interim agreements, no delineation was made until much later in 1965.

Though these issues were tense, they did not result in open war, as they did in the case of the Bahraini border. Specifically, the town of Zubarah and the Hawar Islands were fought over repeatedly. In 1937 Abdullah Bin Jassim sent a force of nearly 4000 men to crush a burgeoning rebellion among the Naim tribe of the area who still had a nominal loyalty towards the Al Khalifah. On their defeat, when the leader of the Naim swore fealty to Abdullah Bin Jassim, Hamad Al Khalifah declared a devastating economic embargo on Qatar. "War declared between two Arabian states" was the title of the Al Nida newspaper in Beirut on 23 July 1937.[261]

Abdullah Bin Jassim promptly built a new fort at Zubarah, much to the annoyance of the Al Khalifah.[262] The notion of a 'neutral zone' for all to save face was then explored, but rejected by Abdullah Bin Jassim.[263] Proposals and counterproposals interspersed with see-sawing tensions continued throughout the 1940s until relations were reduced to a sporadically flaring but simmering mutual-dislike for much of the rest of the century. The issue of Zubarah and the Hawar Islands was only decided in 2001 thanks to the International Criminal Court adjudication.

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[260] Caroe, *Wells of Power : The Oilfields of South-Western Asia; a Regional and Global Study*, p.22.
[261] Penelope Tuson, ed. *Translation of an Article Which Appeares in Mecca Newspaper Um-Ul-Qora*, Records of Qatar : Primary Documents 1820-1960: Voulme 6: 1935-1949 (Slough: Archive Editions, 1991), p.263.
[262] *Copy of a Letter from Hrh Shaikh of Bahrain to the Political Resident, Bahrain*, Records of Qatar : Primary Documents 1820-1960: Voulme 6: 1935-1949 (Slough: Archive Editions, 1991), p.271.
[263] *Note from an Interview with Sheikh Sir Aalman Bin Hamad Al Khalifah, Ruler of Bahrain, 9th December 1943*, p.227.

The Bahraini blockade of Qatar along with the crash of the pearl-market and Qatar's intrinsic lack of industry, laid waste to the small proto-state's economy prompting the aforementioned exodus. Only with the beginnings of oil rent in the late 1940s did Qatar's fortunes revive and even then it was decades before ordinary Qataris saw any real benefit. Hamad bin Abdullah Al Thani was appointed Crown Prince in 1935 and ruled with his father until his (Hamad's) death in May 1948 whereupon Abdullah Bin Jassim resumed the full duties of Sheikh.[264] Yet he remained in power only one more year. Not only was he something of an irascible old man, but he had entrenched favourites, which angered people in his family. Couple this with the increasing royalties flowing to the Sheikh, the lack of its distribution all the while other Qataris were putting up with "several hundred fold increases in the price of basic commodities," and there was serious discontent.[265]

Abdullah bin Jassim's first off-shore royalty payment in July 1949 acted as a catalyst for trouble. The next month various Al Thanis petitioned Abdullah Bin Jassim (again) for a greater share in the oil income. They were (again) rebuffed. This time, however, knowing that he was still weak politically, in addition to robbing Indians and Pakistanis in Doha and instigating a "small shooting war"[266] his family threatened to "cause a riot in the bazaar"[267] unless their demands were met. Abdullah Bin Jassim, under British guidance, acquiesced and gave a monthly stipend of Rs.110 to young members of the Al Thani family, Rs.500 to unmarried and Rs.1000 to married Al Thanis, which continues to this day.[268]

Nevertheless the relationship between Abdullah Bin Jassim and his extended family had broken down almost completely after decades of acrimony leading him to seek British help in guaranteeing his safety and to allow him to abdicate. The British agreed but demanded that all clauses in the 1916 Qatar-Britain agreement be implemented (for example, station a

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[264] *Reference: The Qatar Succession - 31st May 1954*, Records of Qatar : Primary Documents 1820-1960: Voulme 7: 1949-1960 (Slough: Archive Editions, 1991), p.637.
[265] Crystal, *Oil and Politics in the Gulf : Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar*, p.242.
[266] Richard Harlakenden Sanger, *The Arabian Penisular* (London: Cornell University Press ; Oxford University Press, 1954), p.124.
[267] Tuson, *Memo: Political Resident, Bahrain to Foreign Office, London - 15th August 1949*, p.648. *Report of Visit to Qatar: Persian Gulf Residency, Bahrain to Foreign Office, London - 18th August 1949*, p.644.
[268] *Report of Visit to Qatar: Persian Gulf Residency, Bahrain to Foreign Office, London - 18th August 1949*, p.644.

Resident in Doha, ban slavery, which was still prevalent in Doha).[269] Abdullah agreed. "Thus" concludes Sanger, "bringing to an end the first revolution in the Arabian Peninsula to be caused by oil."[270] Yet one must not over emphasize Abdullah Bin Jassim's fall from grace as he continued to be actively involved for years to come in seemingly every decision of importance in conjunction with Ali Bin Abdullah Al Thani, his son who succeeded him on 20 August 1949.[271]

Initially, there were two options for the next Sheikh. Hamad's son Khalifah Bin Hamad Al Thani was 18 years old and thought too young to assume leadership, especially at such a fractious time. This left Abdullah Bin Jassim's second son Ali Bin Abdullah – described by the Political Agent in Bahrain as a "half-wit"[272] – who was not thought to have the necessary skills. Still, with not much option, Ali Bin Abdullah was agreed to be the new Sheikh. However, under duress from Hamad Bin Abdullah's side of the family, Ali Bin Abdullah signed a document agreed upon by notables promising to install Khalifah Bin Hamad as his Crown Prince.[273] This bringing of the extended family into the politics of agreeing upon the new Crown Prince further strengthened their hand when it came to demanding a greater share in profits.

The British, well aware of the antagonistic history of intra-Al Thani machinations, presided over Abdullah Bin Jassim's abdication ceremony – the first public ceremony in Qatar's history – involving a gun salute and a warship.[274] It was designed specifically to instil some kind of formal British authority in Ali Bin Abdullah and to act as an implicit threat to those that might seek to overthrow him. Britain also began to discuss the logistics of sending a small detachment of the Arab legion and a permanent Political Resident in Doha as ways to prop-up Ali Bin Abdullah against the machinations of Al Thani discontent.[275]

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[269] *Reference: The Qatar Succession - 31st May 1954*, p.272.
William Rupert Hay, "Annual Report 1948," in *Foreign Office Annual Reports from Arabia 1930-1960* (Chippenham: Archive Editions, 1993), p.360.
[270] Sanger, *The Arabian Penisular*, p.124.
[271] Tuson, *Confidential Memo: Persian Gulf Residency, Bahrain to Foreign Office, London - 13th September 1949*, p.6.
[272] *Telegram: Political Agent, Bahrain to Political Resident, Bahrain - 29th May 1948*, p.628.
[273] Crystal, *Oil and Politics in the Gulf : Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar*, p.119.
[274] Tuson, *Report: Political Agency, Bahrain to Political Resident, Persian Gulf - 23rd August 1949*, p.657.
[275] *Telegram: Bahrain Residency to Foreign Office, London - No.377*, p.650.

Though the British acquiesced to the decision, the Political Resident prophetically recognised that naming Khalifah Bin Hamad as the Heir Apparent would sow problems for the future given that Ali Bin Abdullah had at least ten sons himself.[276] Duly, when the time came for Ali Bin Abdullah to step down he was replaced with one of his sons and not Khalifah Bin Hamad.

When Ali Bin Abdullah took over he was immediately beset with problems as his father had "thoroughly sacked the treasury...[and taken] the 700,000rs advance from Superior Oil…the palace cars, furniture, and anything else he could move."[277] Clearly, there was no separation in Abdullah Bin Jassim's mind between his and the state's property. This issue would crop up again and again over the next half a century.

However, the agreement to implement all the 1916 Trucial agreements meant that Britain intervened and began to instil something of a modern professional bureaucracy. Hay, the Political Resident, noted that "before 1949 there was, practically speaking, no administration and Sheikh Abdullah's rule was entirely patriarchal."[278] The new British officers assigned to Qatar - Wilton the Political Officer, Cochran the Security advisor, and Plant an advisor – thus began to establish rudimentary institutions and processes.

The British struggled at every turn to implement reforms. Aside from various Al Thani groups continually trying to extort and cajole money out of Ali Bin Abdullah, the Darwish brothers, the most prominent merchants in Doha, who were very close to Abdullah Bin Jassim, "harped continually on the idea of the Sheikh [Ali] setting up a proper office in which business could be transacted systematically."[279] The Darwishs and Abdullah Bin Jassim sought to fill this office with Syrians and Lebanese, who would, it is clearly intimated, act for them and divert somehow a good proportion of profits to them away from the State.

Yet soon Ali Bin Abdullah fell under the spell of the Darwish too, if only because he needed to loan money off the increasingly wealthy and influential family. A report in December

[276] *Memo: Political Agency, Bahrain to Political Resident, Bahrain - 27th November 1948*, p.630.
[277] Crystal, *Oil and Politics in the Gulf : Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar*, p.121.
[278] Rupert Hay, *The Persian Gulf States* (Washington: Middle East Institute, 1959), p.109.
[279] Tuson, *Confidential Memo: Political Agency, Doha to Political Agent, Bahrain - 20th October 1949*, p.12.

1949 eloquently sums up Abdullah Darwish and the extent of his control over the hapless Ali Bin Abdullah.

> Once again I found it difficult not to be impressed with the great energy and multifarious activities of this man. His name features in the reply to almost any question concerning Qatar. He seems to have control of nearly all the necessities and of all the luxuries of life in Doha – food, water, transport, and building are practically his monopolies. His influence over Sheikh Ali seems to be supreme and to have been acquired by making gifts which one would think would be more likely to impress a stupid woman rather than an apparently mature man – cheap pictures carpets, garish furniture and the like...His acquisitions of land and property in Doha and building thereon seem to be increasing and his control over the Customs to be absolute.[280]

By now, the Darwish family were arousing significant anger in various chastened and jealous Al Thani factions (notably in the Bani Ahmad) who felt that they deserved a greater share of profits.[281] The success of the Darwish family was founded on close ties to the British (for contracts), but this proved to be their undoing with the anti-British, pan-Arab sentiment from 1956 onwards. Labour disputes expanded out of control and Ahmad Bin Ali Al Thani, Ali Bin Abdullah's son looking to make a name for himself against his rival for power Khalifah Bin Hamad, nominally supported the popular move against the family. These disputes which sometimes became mini-riots pitted Qatari workers against the mostly foreign policy force, putting the ruler in a difficult position.[282]

A key faction was the Bani Ahmed, their patron being the brother of Jassim, Qatar's revered leader. As Crystal notes, Ali Bin Abdullah stood against this powerful family section with only the Darwish and his son, Ahmad Bin Ali for support. In 1952 with a new set of agreements with oil companies, the family banded together to demand a quarter of the state's revenues. After acrimonious bickering, Ali Bin Abdullah acquiesced. Yet still the demands and truculence increased. It was around this time that Ali Bin Abdullah petitioned the Political Resident to be allowed to banish particularly recalcitrant Qataris to Aden instead of

[280] *Confidential Memo: Political Agency, Doha to Political Resident, Bahrain*, p.17.
[281] *Confidential Dispatch No1: Political Agency, Doha to Political Resident, Bahrain - 11th January 1956*, p.388.
[282] Bernard A Burrows, "Annual Report 1955," in *Foreign Office Annual Reports from Arabia 1930-1960* (Chippenham: Archive Editions, 1993), p.169-71.

to Saudi Arabia where "they are given a good time by the Saudis and are very soon allowed back as a result of Saudi intervention."[283]

In 1956 when the family demanded a 150 per cent increase in allowances, Ali Bin Abdullah had had enough and joined his father in seclusion. The Political Agency in Doha opined that this was primarily because of "the absence of Abdullah Darwish on whom he used to rely so much."[284] Ahmed took over the day-to-day matters.

Towards the late 1950s the methods of distribution began to change. In part to try to regularise such efforts and part to quell issues, particularly troublesome or important members of the family were employed by the State. Ministries or other sections were hived off and given over to Al Thanis for their forbearance. For example, Nasir Khalid of the Bani Ahmad section of the family became the new municipality Minister to assuage his family's demands. Although this satisfied (temporarily) the Bani Ahmed, in the small and delicately balanced world of Doha's politics, this prompted another faction – Ali Bin Abdullah's brother Hasan and his supporters, for example – to object. So while such a policy could work intermittently, given the sheer number of Al Thanis –the largest Royal family in the region as a percentage of the population – this policy could only go so far.

Qatar's continually increasing oil revenues facilitated allowances for the family to be increased, temporarily placating them. Yet, as the Political Resident in Doha noted, "such a regime of feudal patronage and intrigue cannot be expected to survive. Sooner or later it is bound to crash and the state of affairs in Qatar today is such that a relatively minor incident could precipitate the process."[285] This sentiment was behind British backed efforts to introduce some kind of constitutional reform in Qatar, or at the very least to form more Ministries to broaden the government to apportion "some responsibility to those natural leaders who have at present no outlet for their energies except the purely destructive occupation of fomenting disorder."[286]

[283] Tuson, *Confidential Memo: British Residency, Bahrain to Governor of Aden - 6th September 1954*, p.276.
[284] *Confidential Memo: Political Agency, Doha to Political Resident, Bahrain - 6th October 1956*, p.420.
[285] *Report on Qatar: Political Agency, Doha to Political Resident, Bahrain - 28th December 1958*, p.514-5.
[286] Ibid., p.519.

Another method used for control was the distribution of land. Nasir Khalid, therefore, as Municipalities Minister had enormous power as distributing land in such a fast-developing country was as good (if not better with appreciation) as handing out cash. Al Thanis also began to simply mark out land with stones which they then claimed as their own. Though he initially disagreed, Ali Bin Abdullah, who retained vestiges of power, – again – soon caved to this method. Land prices rose so much that by the 1970s a new suburb grew up – West Bay – which was wholly built on reclaimed land from the sea as this was cheaper than buying existing land.

Qatar's international affairs were typically concerned with its immediate region, though there were increasing foreign visits from the mid-1950s onwards. For example, Colonel Anwar Sadat of Egypt visited Doha twice in 1955 as did King Saud of Saudi Arabia.[287] Interestingly, though no desire to get rid of the British protective agreements could be discerned, the Resident noted that Qatar's foreign policies often "closely reflected the reaction in Saudi Arabia."[288] The next year saw a rash of pro-Egyptian demonstrations in Qatar where the protestors, angry at the UK's intervention against Egypt in Suez, threw stones at the Political Residency. There was also a "partial strike in sympathy with the Algerians, the sabotage of oil installations…and a general increase in the strength of Egyptian propaganda and of its local agents."[289]

Ali Bin Abdullah spent nearly six months of 1958 out of the country, visiting Saudi Arabia, Persia, Egypt, Iran, the UK, and Switzerland leaving Qatar to be ruled in an uneasy coalition of Khalifah Bin Hamad and Ahmed Bin Ali.[290] Further exacerbating intra-Qatari issues was the context of assorted 'outside influences,' specifically from the United Arab Republic (UAR), in which the two rivals jockeying for position over succession acted as "a cancer on the body politic, impinging on virtually every aspect of Qatar's social and economic life."[291]

[287] Burrows, "Annual Report 1955," p.171.
[288] Ibid., p.171-2.
[289] "Annual Report 1956," p.257.
[290] Tuson, *Report on Qatar: Political Agency, Doha to Political Resident, Bahrain - 28th December 1958*, p.513.
[291] Ibid., p.511.

In 1958 and 1959 oil companies unilaterally announced a price cut.[292] This reduced Qatar's revenues from QDR287 million in 1958 to QDR253 million in 1959 which only recovered slightly in 1960 to QDR260 million, hastening the formation of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) group.[293] Domestically, protests at the cut in allowances from the family unsurprisingly erupted including an attempted assassination of the Sheikh in Lebanon.[294] Long tired of family problems and increasingly ill, Ali Bin Abdullah abdicated in 1960.

Khalifah Bin Hamad was in direct competition with Ahmad Bin Ali for leadership. Though it was already technically agreed that Khalifah Bin Hamad would take over, in reality Ali Bin Abdullah had devolved significant power and decision making capabilities to his son and even sought British guarantees that he could take over.[295] With British backing and Khalifah Bin Hamad's eventual acquiescence, Ahmed Bin Ali became the new Sheikh and visited the UK in July 1961 for an official state visit.[296]

Ahmed Bin Ali chose not to face down the new demands from the Al Thani and divided up Qatar's oil revenue 25 per cent for himself, 20 per cent for the Sheikhs, 2.5 per cent each for Ali Bin Abdullah and the Heir Apparent (Khalifah Bin Hamad) and the remaining half for the state's coffers.[297] It was around this time that Ali Bin Abdullah and his son Ahmed were reputed to own four hundred and fifty two cars between them.[298] Even though Qatar "probably has [sic] the highest per capita income of any country in the world (over £20 million for about 50,000 inhabitants)" a combination of "the extravagance of successive Rulers and their failure to curb the veracity of the Ruling family" and "the lack of any regular organisation of State finances or budgetary control" meant that ordinary Qatar's were

[292] El Mallakh, *Qatar : Development of an Oil Economy*, p.46.
[293] QDR – Qatar and Dubai Riyal Al Kuwari, *Oil Revenues in the Gulf Emirates : Patterns of Allocation and Impact on Economic Development*, p.117.
[294] "Shots Fired at Qatar Ruler's House," *The Times (London)* 1st June 1960.
[295] George Middleton, "Annual Report 1958," in *Foreign Office Annual Reports from Arabia 1930-1960* (Chippenham: Archive Editions, 1993), p.395.
[296] Anita L.P. Burdett, ed. *British Consulate General, Geneva to Shaikh Ahmed Ali Al Thani, Veronix - 29th June 1961*, Records of Qatar 1961-1965: 1961 (Slough, U.K.: Archive Editions Limited, 1997), p.30.
[297] Al Kuwari, *Oil Revenues in the Gulf Emirates : Patterns of Allocation and Impact on Economic Development*, P.117.
[298] Fred Halliday, *Arabia without Sultans*, 2nd Edition ed. (London: Saqi Books, 2002), p.449.

unimpressed when development projects had to be cut back in order to grant the Al Thani their cut.[299]

Ahmed Bin Ali's profligacy and Al Thani greed reached such a level that not only did the he need to take out a loan of £1 million from the Ottoman Bank but in the face of repeated British requests for increased fiscal reasonability H.B. Walker of the Arabian Department wrote a note considering removing the U.K.'s protection from Qatar.[300] To this, E.F. Given, his superior, replied that "I agree with H.B. Walker; if you allow the Al Thani to go on spitting in our eye for too long we shall become a laughing-stock in the Gulf and our influence will decline."[301]

As these ideas ruminated in Whitehall, key foreign policy decisions continued to be taken in protracted consultation with London. On the border issue of Halul Island with Abu Dhabi, Ahmed Bin Ali, for example, brought it up in conversation with the British Secretary of State and the Lord Privy Seal on his visit and reportedly stated that "he realised the matter was complicated, but the British had been in the Gulf a long time and know how to settle these problems better than any of the Rulers themselves."[302] Flattery this may well be, but there is a kernel of truth here: none of the smaller Gulf rulers could implement any policy without the acquiescence of the British, nor were they technically allowed to have foreign relations without London's knowledge. At this time relations with Saudi Arabia were considered to be positive with the rulers exchanging visits, but still their border was not wholly settled.

Even when Ahmed Bin Ali went on trips abroad, such as to Kuwait and Jordan, not only was there often a British presence throughout the meetings, but the visits themselves appear to have been ceremonial at best with little to no political 'content' whatsoever.[303] While Ahmed Bin Ali did seek positive relations with London, he simultaneously needed to show

[299] Burdett, *Confidential: Qatar Finances - 10th November 1961*, p.187.
[300] This note struck a chord in the FCO and was the subject of numerous other discussions. *Annex to Qatar Economic Report for 1961*, Records of Qatar 1961-1965: 1962 (Slough, U.K.: Archive Editions Limited, 1997), p.189.
[301] *Secret Note Bq1051/2g H.B.Walker - 15th November 1961*, p.226-9.
[302] *Confidential Record of Conversation between Secretary of State and the Ruler of Qatar - 5th July 1961*, p.35,6.
[303] See, for examples, reports on visits to Kuwait and Jordan. *Despatch No.25 Political Agent, Kuwait to British Residency, Bahrain - 22nd May 1961*, p.61. & *Confidential: British Embassy, Amman to Foreign Office, London - 10th August 1961*.

some kind of 'distance' too to avoid the worst of the Egyptian-inspired pan-Arab sentiment. For example, Qatar was not ready to support the outward manifestations of the British presence such as allowing RAF training exercises in Qatari territory.[304] This exact sense of logic pervades Qatar's foreign policy to this day.

There are also examples of Ahmed Bin Ali following a well-established Qatari policy of hosting exiles. Specifically, two men wanted for questioning on terrorism charges after an explosion of a Shell petrol station in Matrah, Oman in March 1961 as well as the sinking of the British ship *Dara.* The Sheikh initially refused to arrest and extradite the two demanding suitable evidence. Not only did he not want to be seen as 'anti-rebel' in an age of revolutionary zeal but domestically, he did not want to appear less nationalistic than Khalifah.

In April 1963 the union formed by Egypt, Syria, and Iraq prompted popular demonstrations and a strike. These events were amplified after an Al Thani shot into a crowd. Opposition quickly coalesced into a 'National Unity Front' which organised a general strike. Their demands were – as even the British noted – "not radical": they sought, for example, to assure the place of Arabs and Qataris in society; equality for all before the law; settlement of Al Thani debts domestically and demanded that the Ruling family pay electricity and water rates.[305] Within a few weeks and with vague promises of reforms, the strike fizzled out.[306] Around 50 key Qataris behind this organisation were jailed and others exiled but some improvements were made. Ahmed Bin Ali modestly reduced his allowances (temporarily) and beseeched Al Thanis to respect the law and pay their debts. Also in 1964 he introduced, as Crystal notes, some popular measures including subsidised or free homes and loans for poor Qataris as a 'quick' way to deflect criticism.

In contrast to Ahmed Bin Ali, from early on Khalifah Bin Hamad appeared to understand the longer term importance of placating ordinary Qataris. During labour unrest in the 1950s he nominally acted as their champion. Similarly he put himself forward as a pan-Arabist,

[304] *Qatar Resident Annual Review for 1961*, p.261.
[305] *Telegram No.41 of April 22: Doha to Foreign Office - 22nd April 1963*, Records of Qatar 1961-1965: 1963 (Slough, U.K.: Archive Editions Limited, 1997), p.29.
[306] Frank Stoakes, "Social and Political Change in the Thrird World," in *The Arabian Peninsula : Society and Politics*, ed. Derek Hopwood (London: Allen and Unwin, 1972), p.197.

though remaining privately cordial with the British. In 1957 he again aligned himself with Nasserists and became Education Minister replacing Jassim Darwish and allowed the Ministry to (further) become something of a bastion of Pan-Arabist sentiment. Also in this post he used this "sphere of activities...[to deal] with matters which really impinged on foreign affairs and certainly should have been dealt with by the Acting Ruler and not the Minister of Education."[307]

In 1962 Khalifah Bin Hamad was given a large portfolio by the Sheikh to perform (Deputy Ruler, Minister of Finance "responsible for the general conduct of economic, social, cultural, administrative and 'other' policy"[308]), further increasing his role and importance. Under his watch the number of schools increased significantly from only one in 1961 to sixty-seven in late 1962 and the "number of pupils enrolled at these schools is [sic] increasing annually by about 30 per cent."[309]

Like Ahmed Bin Ali, he sought to assert a certain distance from the British by abolishing the post of advisor and two assistant advisors, lessening British control and oversight.[310] In addition to bolstering his notional 'anti-Imperialist' credentials, this also allowed him to extend his own interest further in Government. Yet he still sought British advice specifically to help curb the exorbitant allowances of members of his own family.[311] So bad had the family's continual demands for more money become that when it was suggested raising production levels from 8 to 8.5 million tons in 1961, both ruling Sheikhs demurred believing that "the extra income derived from so small an increase would not compensate for the demands from the family for extra money which would inevitably follow the news the Ruler had accepted increased production."[312]

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[307] One example given by Doha's Political Agent was of Khalifah trying to organise a trip to take a group of school children to Khartoum. Tuson, *Confidential Memo: Political Agency, Doha to Political Resident, Bahrain*, p.456.
[308] Burdett, *Despatch No.7: Political Agency, Doha to British Residency, Bahrain - 13th March 1962*, p.78.
[309] *Government of Qatar, Department of Education to U.N. Extended Programme of Technical Assistance for Education Experts and Fellowships*, p.175.
[310] *Confidential: Foreign Office, London to British Embassy, Washington D.C. - 11th January 1961*, p.80.
[311] *Despatch No. 55e: Persian Gulf Economic Report No 1, 1961 - 22nd May 1961*, p.153.
[312] *Confidential Annex to Economic Report No. 2* p.157.

When Ahmed Bin Ali assumed leadership he "displayed no particular desire to rule, preferring Europe, Asia, indeed anywhere to Qatar, leaving Khalifah *de facto* ruler."[313] Indeed, a telling number of British documents conversing with him are routed through the Qatar Embassy in Geneva. As Prime Minister, Heir Apparent and with his wide portfolio, Khalifah Bin Hamad was running Qatar from the mid-1960s onwards. Ahmed Bin Ali's delegation of power to Khalifah Bin Hamad meant that he had a free hand to speak for Qatar internationally.

In June 1965 Khalifah Bin Hamad and Hassan Kamal went to Riyadh to negotiate the Qatari-Saudi border agreement; something that was encouraged by the British even though technically all foreign relations ought to have ran through London.[314] The agreement that was reached with the Saudi Minister of Petroleum Affairs Ahmed Zaki Yamani was surprising and concerning for the British. Riding roughshod over existing understandings of the border, the new agreement gave Saudi Arabia previously unclaimed land giving the Kingdom access to the Gulf south of the Qatar Peninsula. This land was firmly believed by London to belong to Sheikh Shakhbut, the Ruler of Abu Dhabi, which was also under British protection at that time.[315]

Though Khalifah Bin Hamad gave up vestigial Qatari claims to Khor Al Udeid, the land at the centre of the issue, the agreement gave Qatar a generous swathe of land nearby, while also significantly benefitting Saudi Arabia by giving it access to the Gulf and breaking up any contiguous land passage between Qatar and Abu Dhabi. Indeed, the American Consul-General in Dhahran informed the Qatar Political Resident that the new agreement effectively gave Qatar 75 square miles worth of land "previously…regarded as falling within the Aramco [Saudi oil] concession."[316]

[313] Crystal, *Oil and Politics in the Gulf : Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar*, p.155.
[314] Kamal was an Egyptian lawyer who was of central importance in Qatar until the late 1980s. Educated in Egypt he had the trust of Khalifah and was the central driving force behind the work of running Qatar for he – and more or less only he – had the experience to do so.
[315] R.H.M Boyle, "Letter: Qatar Politial Agent to Sir William Luce (28 June 1965)," in *Arabian Boundaries: New Documents 1965*, ed. Richard Schofield (Oxford: Archive Editions, 1997), p.168.
[316] "Letter: Qatar Politial Agent to Sir William Luce (01 July 1965)," in *Arabian Boundaries: New Documents 1965*, ed. Richard Schofield (Oxford: Archive Editions, 1997), p.170.

Additionally, off-the-record interviews in Doha with protagonists aware of these negotiations suggest that there was more at stake here than simply land. Khalifah Bin Hamad, while Crown Prince and in charge of most portfolios of Government, still held some understandable fears about being usurped (for the third time) when it came to being appointed Emir. According to one source, part of the 1965 agreement included understandings from Saudi Arabia to support Khalifah Bin Hamad's ascension to Emir in Qatar and his continued rule.[317]

Such a deal makes sense and is backed up by an understanding of the context. Khalifah Bin Hamad and Kamal would have been under no illusions that they were, by giving Saudi Arabia Khor Al Udeid, angering not only Abu Dhabi but Britain too. Indeed, a later letter from the Political Resident in Qatar notes that Ahmed Bin Ali "realises that the Deputy Ruler [Khalifah Bin Hamad] has gone too far (in addition to breaking the assurance given to the Political Resident)."[318] Unless this was a simple mistake, which is not a believable proposition, it would be logical to conclude that Khalifah Bin Hamad received something in return for making this concession. It would also make sense for Khalifah Bin Hamad to seek some personal guarantees from the Saudi elite regarding his own position and for Qatar more generally. Qatar's history is nothing if not a history of its elite seeking agreement to secure security. Moreover, the historical record of Khalifah Bin Hamad's rule in Doha (more of which below) was of a distinct reliance and deference to Saudi Arabia.

Despite British protestations, Ahmed Bin Ali signed the agreement in December 1965 however the bill itself was not ratified. British pressure likely played a part in this as Britain did not announce its withdrawal from the Gulf until 1968 and Qatar was thus contentedly reliant on Britain's protection. However, when the matter came up for discussion in 1971 when Khalifah Bin Hamad and Kamal visited Riyadh, the Saudi reaction was vociferous leaving Khalifah Bin Hamad "severely shaken" according to the British Resident in Qatar.[319] With the British having left the same year within months of the disagreeable Riyadh meeting the agreement was officially recognised and ratified.

[317] David B. Roberts, 06 November 2012.
[318] Boyle, "Letter: Qatar Politial Agent to H Phippips (27 July 1965)," p.183.
[319] "Letter: To Bahrain Residency," in *Arabian Boundaries: New Documents 1966-1975*, ed. Richard Schofield (Chippenham: Cambridge Archive Editions, 2009), p.166.

## Independence

In 1968 the British informed the Trucial States and Qatar that it would withdraw from its role in the Gulf and by 1971 Qatar became an independent state. Initially, it was assumed that Qatar and Bahrain would join with the Trucial States in one federated state. Yet aside from the differences over deciding on the key roles on-going fundamental problems between Bahrain and Qatar precluded them joining the putative UAE.

In 1970 the Qatari constitution was written. This formally delineated a Government structure for Qatar including the establishment of an Advisory Council to assist the ruler and the creation of Ministries. In September 1971 Qatar became independent and the celebrations were led by Khalifah Bin Hamad in Doha. Ahmed Bin Ali, who was on holiday in Switzerland at the time did not even return home. By 1972 Ahmed Bin Ali still had not installed an Advisory Council, some two years after its official promulgation. Moreover, his son, Abdul-Aziz Bin Ahmed Al Thani was placing himself to take over from his father at Khalifah Bin Hamad's expense. Not only did Abdul-Aziz Bin Ahmed do "everything he can to provoke, annoy and where possible, humiliate the Deputy Amir [Khalifah Bin Hamad]" but he was, in the words of the British resident at the time, "a boorish horror and the kindest diagnosis is to conclude that he is mad."[320] Of direct relevance to Khalifah Bin Hamad was Abdul-Aziz Bin Ahmed's squandering of the state's revenue transparently buying support in Doha and his hoarding of as much arms and munitions as the Qatar Army in his palaces.[321]

The exorbitantly expensive lifestyle and impunity with which Ahmed Bin Ali and Abdul-Aziz Bin Ahmed conducted themselves contributed to Khalifah Bin Hamad being immediately recognised as a worthy Emir when he took over on 22 February 1972 when Ahmed Bin Ali was on one of his many foreign excursions. Saudi Arabia too recognised Khalifah Bin Hamad's ascension quickly, potentially as per the agreement he fostered in 1965. After a modicum of caution from the British, Khalifah Bin Hamad was soon accepted as a legitimate

[320] Anita L.P. Burdett, ed. *British Resident Ef Henderson, Doha, to Jl Beaven Arabian Department, FCO London, 'Qatar Internal' 21 February 1972*, vol. IV: 1970-1971, Records of Qatar 1966-1971 (Slough, U.K.: Archive Editions Limited, 2006), p.724.
[321] *British Resident Ef Henderson, Doha, to Arabian Department, FCO London, 'Priority, Cypher Cat A'*, vol. IV: 1970-1971, Records of Qatar 1966-1971 (Slough, U.K.: Archive Editions Limited, 2006).

ruler if for no other reason than the British were long since tired of dealing with Ahmed (a "singularly useless individual"[322]).

Indicating an appreciation of the importance of the wider world and his direction of thought, Khalifah Bin Hamad issued an advert in The Times of London in May 1972 titled 'The Era of Reform.'[323] His first issue was the perennial problem of Qatar's Sheikhs: the Al Thani family. Unlike his predecessors and true to his conversations with the British in the 1960s, he opted to control and reduce their allowances. He did this by changing his base of support. Instead of the Al Thani cabals supporting his rule for a share of profits as had been the case for previous Sheikhs, Khalifah Bin Hamad broadened his appeal. He reinstated the link between the Sheikh and his people using the 1970 constitution.

The professionalization of the state, the emergence of Ministries and bureaucracies and the increasingly busy Sheikhly role had significantly fractured the traditional line of communication between the ruled and the ruler. Legitimacy and acquiescence for the Sheikh's continued rule was traditionally derived from his role not only as protector and provider for his people but also from his accessibility for arbitration or patronage: walking up to his abode in the 19th century for an audience was a relatively straight forward matter; not so as the 1950s and 60s wore on (particularly so when Ahmed Bin Ali was ever more out of the country). This break contributed to the ever greater reliance that the Qatari Sheikh had on his extended family: replacing traditional popular support with the powerful but niche support of the Al Thani.

Khalifah Bin Hamad had a history that he could call on of supporting 'popular' movements and policies. He quickly bolstered his reputation as a Sheikh for all Qataris and not just for the Al Thani: he cut Al Thani benefits; transferred his stipend of the budget (25 per cent) to the state's coffers; increased social aid by 30 per cent; old age pensions by 25 per cent; armed forces and civil servant pensions by 20 per cent; cancelled outstanding housing payments and built 2500 free housing units within a year; implemented an amended

[322] British official quoted in Crystal, *Oil and Politics in the Gulf : Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar*, p.155.
[323] "State of Qatar," *The Times* 15 May 1972.

provisional Constitution; established an Advisory Council; further sought to secure state jobs for Qataris and continued to "pour large amounts of money" into all social services.[324]

In addition to these direct distributive policies and attempts to include swathes of Qataris in the emerging bureaucracies as a form of indirect distribution, Khalifah also sought to engender a civic myth. This proved to be difficult. Not only was there significant competition for 'belonging' (such as pan-national, familial and tribal identities as well as the notion of belonging to one Islamic *umma*)[325] but there were not many 'civic resources' on which to draw: Qatar had neither a glorious battle for independence nor any other overly auspicious historical moments.

Therefore, Khalifah sought to find Qatar's history. A British archaeological team was dispatched in 1973 following on from a less successful expedition in the 1950s. In 1975 a museum was established, furnished with artefacts from the digs and accounts of ordinary Qataris that placed Qatar in its historical context with the Al Thani family suitably benevolently ruing throughout. The Information Ministry from 1972 onwards continued to control and add to Qatar's nascent historical narrative.

Linking to the desire to establish legitimacy and the typical trappings of statehood, Khalifah Bin Hamad's Qatar was relatively active internationally in terms of receiving delegations and establishing diplomatic missions. While this activity followed the regional pattern at that time of newly enriched Gulf States seeking to support regional causes to become bona fide members of the international community and was in no way as unusual as the post-1990s foreign policies, it is important to note this burgeoning of Qatar's international relations.

Diplomatic relations were established, the first Ambassadors hosted, and delegations (often Presidential or Prime Ministerial) were received from Belgium, Brazil, Burundi, the Comoros Islands, the Congo, Egypt, Finland, Gabon, Indonesia, Mali, Malta, Morocco, Palestine, North Korea, Senegal, Switzerland, Syria, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uganda in 1974, 1975, and

[324] *Oil and Politics in the Gulf : Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar*, p.156-7.
[325] Ibid., p.163.

1976 alone.[326] This is not to mention the millions of dollars that Qatar donated to a variety of causes from UNESCO to struggling countries to the Arab Peace Force in Lebanon.[327]

These international relations, civic myth building ventures, and the vast increase in the state's bureaucracy were funded by rising oil prices. In 1971 oil revenue was $300 million. In 1973 it doubled to $600 million and then it rose to $2 billion the next year with essentially flat production.[328]

Khalifah nationalised the oil industry in 1976 and changed concessions into contracts. Production peaked in 1979 and, despite prices being temporarily elevated by the Iranian Revolution, oil was considered to be in its twilight years in Qatar. The fall of oil prices in 1982 and 1983 led to the first national deficit in years. With Qatar's oil future looking bleak and Qatar's previous half-hearted economic diversification attempts foundering against regional competition, domestic cuts were made, charges for health care, water and electricity were introduced and 3000 government employees were laid off.[329]

Khalifah was forced to turn to gas, which at the time was seen as little more than an annoying by-product of oil exploration and certainly not a key product in and of itself. Thus

[326] "Diplomatic Relations with Finland to Be Established," *Cairo MENA* 1974.
"First Senegalese Ambassador," *Paris AFP* 1974.
"Diplomatic Ties Established with Trinidad, Tobago," *Cairo MENA* 1974.
"'Arafat Meets with Amir in Ad-Dawhah," *Cairo MENA* 1974.
"As-Sadat Stops over at Ad-Dawhah for Talks," *Cairo MENA* 1974.
"Gabonese Foreign Minister Arrives for Visit," *Cairo MENA* 1974.
"Diplomatic Relations Established with Brazil," *Cairo MENA* 20 May 1974.
"First Moroccan Ambassador," *Qatar Domestic Service* 14 October 1974.
"Qatar, Burindi Establish Diplomatic Relations," *Cairo MENA* 04 November 1974.
"Mali President Arrives for State Visit," *Cairo MENA* 05 May 1975.
"Swiss Ambassadir's Credentials," *Doha* 12 June 1975.
"Diplomatic Relations with Malta," *Doha QNA* 20 June 1975.
"Ambassador to Belgium," *Doha QNA* 19 July 1975.
"Shaykh Recieves Dprk's Chon Myong-Su," *Pyongyang KCNA* 22 August 1975.
"Uganda President Amin Arrives on Visit," *Doha QNA* 20 October 1975.
"Cabined Decides to Recognize Comoro Islands," *Doha QNA* 28 January 1976.
"Syrian President Al-Asad in Ad-Dawhah for Talks," *Damascus Domestic Service* 1974.
"Congolese Minister Concludes 3-Day Visit," *Doha QNA* 09 March 1976.
"Diplomtic Relations with Indonesia," *Doha QNA* 12 June 1975.
[327] "2 Million Dollars Given to Mali as Grant in Aid," *Doha QNA* 09 March 1976.
"Contributions to Unesco," *Doha QNA* 09 July 1975.
[328] Hashimoto, Elass, and Eller, "Liquified Natural Gas from Qatar: The Qatargas Project," p.8.
[329] Ibid., p.9.

far only relatively small amounts of gas had been exported from the Dukhan field.[330] This was despite the discovery of huge quantities of gas to the north of Qatar in the early 1970s when Shell was looking for oil. Yet new priorities altered this logic. By 1984 BP, Total, and Qatar General Petroleum Corporation (QGPC) banded together to invest in what was dubbed The North Field. Arguably the central champion of the new gas agenda was Crown Prince Hamad Bin Khalifah, who saw the potential clearly and did not suffer from either a lack of ambition or from the deep lethargy of action that characterised his father's generation.

Yet these negotiations were occurring at a time of severe regional tensions. In the aftermath of the 1979 Iranian Revolution the Gulf became polarised then militarised with the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war. Further adding to the tumult in the early 1980s were security incidents, such as the Libyan-sponsored attempted assassination of either Khalifah Bin Hamad himself of a GCC Ruler due in Doha in 1983.[331] Nevertheless, Qatar, like its fellow GCC States, attempted to tow a vaguely middle line between Iran and Iraq. For sure, they were financially supporting Iraq to the tune of, for example, $250m in 1982, but they nevertheless strove to maintain a certain evenness for fear, as much as anything else, that Iran would actively target the GCC States.[332] Similarly, though the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was established in reaction to the Iranian Revolution, it was covered with a veneer of economic cooperation and was not as nakedly military in its orientation as, for example, NATO.

The riots in Mecca that led to the deaths of several hundred pilgrims in 1987, widely if controversially and simplistically blamed on Iranians, was one of the key catalysts that prompted the change in the GCC states' perspectives. Qatar followed this trend initially at least and increased its support of Iran, though its emerging leadership were wary of simply following the prescribed GCC-line.

The Iran-Iraq war and the multitude of issue surrounding it caused the gas talks to stall and the obvious risks initially put off would-be investors. Eventually the Qatari government mortgaged the country against future income and raised the necessary investment. Further

[330] "Q.P.C's Liquid Gas Project," *Middle East Economic Digest (MEED)* 10th March 1971.
[331] Helen Chapin Metz, ed. *Persian Gulf States: Country Studies*, 3rd Edition ed., Area Handbook Series (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1994), p.190.
[332] Pelletiere, *The Iran-Iraq War : Chaos in a Vacuum*, p.72.

beset with technical difficulties and problems, all of which were exacerbated with the exodus of contractors from the region with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, it was not until 03 September 1991 that gas production began for phase 1: domestic consumption from the North Field.[333]

Phase two was scheduled to come on-line in 1996. It consisted of a regional system of pipes to other GCC countries and received a warm reception at the GCC annual meeting when it was first proposed in November 1989. On paper this plan was attractive to Qatar. Not only would it further integrate the GCC but, if Qatar was a (or perhaps the) regional gas supplier it would increase their power and prestige. Furthermore, the costs, at around $2 billion, were more manageable than a global LNG hub and spoke system that would be much more expensive. Yet these plans soon foundered.

First, in the early 1990s Saudi Arabia found its own not insignificant gas supplies. Riyadh refused permission for Qatari pipes to traverse the Kingdom's maritime boundaries fearing competition. Indeed, Saudi Arabia also tried, with questionable geographical merit, to refuse permission for an undersea pipe from Qatar to the UAE. These decisions also occurred at a time of worsening relations with Saudi Arabia more generally. Second, Kuwait was in no state after the Iraqi invasion to negotiate any gas contracts. And third, a deal with Bahrain, which only represented a small market in any case, could not be undertaken thanks to lingering and sporadically flaring issues over the Hawar Islands.[334]

Rebuffed by its regional allies Qatar instead pursued phase 3: forging ahead with LNG plans. With significant financial and technical backing not to mention long-term guaranteed contracts from various Japanese and South Korean consortiums, the huge levels of necessary investment were procured. This plan was to be of central importance for Qatar to deal with a perennial concern: Saudi Arabia.

Historically, as noted above, Saudi Arabia has long loomed over Qatar. Relations were often highly fraught as the Qatari leadership sought to preserve as much of their own power and autonomy as possible, while balancing Saudi Arabia or at times using it as a counterweight.

[333] Hashimoto, Elass, and Eller, "Liquified Natural Gas from Qatar: The Qatargas Project," p.15.
[334] Ibid., p.17.

For most of the twentieth century, Qatar sought good relations with Saudi Arabia. Not only were they the only two Wahhabi countries on earth, but for Qatari leaders the notion of 'keep your friends close, and your enemies closer' prevailed. This stemmed from practicality as much as anything else. Not only was Saudi Arabia exponentially more powerful that Qatar but Saudi tribes extracted taxes from people often far inside the Qatari Peninsula, such as those at the Qatar Petroleum Company's camp at Dukhan and Murrah tribes people near Zubarah, as late as 1949.[335] These tax extractions highlight not only the lax Qatari control of their borders but the impunity and strength of the Saudi authorities.

The contention that in 1965 Khalifah Bin Hamad sought to assure harmonious Qatari-Saudi relations by allowing Saudi Arabia to claim Khor Al Udeid fits with the logic of seeking to ameliorate this key regional power. With or without this understanding after the British left in 1971, various experts have noted it was natural for Qatar to operate under the auspices of Saudi Arabia's leadership.[336] As well as following Saudi Arabia's lead in various "regional and global issues" Metz notes that Qatar was the only other country to observe the full forty days of mourning after the death of Saudi Arabia's King Faisal in 1975 and King Khalid in 1982.[337] In later years as the Saudi-US relationship became ever closer with increasing training and supplying of weapons an in-depth, special report in *The Times* of London describes Qatar as being "glad to accept the Saudi military umbrella, facilitated by the United States, particularly in the summer of 1984."[338] A bilateral defence agreement was also signed in 1982 and Riyadh often acted as an interlocutor for Qatar in regional disputes.[339]

A 1974 Abu Dhabi-Saudi border agreement made public in 1995 further ate away at Qatar's territory near Khor Al Udeid to the tune of 15 littoral miles.[340] This highlights Riyadh's disregard for Qatar's autonomy and bolsters the notion of Qatar operating as "but an

[335] Kelly, *Eastern Arabian Frontiers*, p.243.
[336] Dargin, "Qatar's Natural Gas: The Foreign-Policy Driver," p.137.
Quandt, *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s: Foreign Policy, Security and Oil*, pp.24-25.
[337] Metz, *Persian Gulf States: Country Studies*, p.192.
[338] Sarah Searight, "Special Report on Qatar (3) : This Proud Aloof Nation," *The Times* 12 November 1985.
[339] Metz, *Persian Gulf States: Country Studies*, p.192.
"$3 Million Paid to Lebanon for Arab Peace Force ", *Doha QNA* 30 December 1976.
[340] Ramin Seddiq, "Border Disputes on the Arabian Peninsula," in *Policy Watch* (The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2001).

adjunct to Saudi Arabia."[341] Moreover, Kelly even noted that now that Qatar was isolated, Saudi Arabia was in a position to "should the political occasion arise – outright absorb the sheikhdom within their domain."[342]

Qatar's precarious state in international relations did not need to be explained to Khalifah Bin Hamad. Former British Ambassador to Qatar Colin Brant (1978-1981) recalled a conversation with where he noted that "Qatar being a small country, he [Khalifah Bin Hamad] has to discern the path that the other Gulf countries are treading, and follow it after them."[343] Khalifah Bin Hamad and other Qatari leaders were willing to sign up to the Kingdom's protection as long as, firstly, there was no alternative for securing their state and, secondly, the protector could actually offer some kind of protection. Both these factors were soon to change significantly.

The tanker wars in the late 1980s when Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States were forced to seek American help to reflag their ships to avoid Iranian attack was the first inkling that Saudi Arabia was not necessarily all that powerful. Such concerns were confirmed with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and Saudi Arabia's decision to ask the Western coalition to form Operation Desert Shield to protect the Kingdom. If they could not protect themselves no Qatari leader could seriously expect Riyadh to protect Qatar should the need arise. Clearly, a change in Qatar's foreign policy orientation was in the offing, for in a region which averaged a serious military conflict every ten years in the twentieth century, finding a suitable leviathan to protect Qatar was essential.

Notionally, Qatar could have taken some comfort in the collective regional body, the GCC. Yet in reality it was and is today a deeply dysfunctional organisation that provides no effective military support. This supra-national club comprising Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, the UAE, and Oman, was established on 25 May 1981.[344] The primary spark for its inception was security orientated in relation to the growing Iranian threat. But the GCC was also envisaged to be an economic and political union.

[341] Litwak, *Sources of Inter-State Conflict*, p.52.
[342] Kelly, "Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States," p.449; Litwak, *Sources of Inter-State Conflict*, p.52.
[343] Brant, "Valedictory from Qatar: A Land of Promise," p.2-3.
[344] Nancy C. Troxler, "The Gulf Co-Operation Council: The Emergence of an Institution," *Millennium Journal of International Studies* 16, no. 1 (1987): p.1.

From the very beginning to today most of the achievements of the GCC have been rather prosaic. For example, a common system of measurements was introduced by empowering the Saudi Arabian Board of Standards and Measurements to act across the GCC.[345] While more substantive agreements were subsequently made, it is tempting to agree with Twinam who suggests that nothing concrete that the Council would achieve would ever "match in importance the simple fact that it had been created."[346]

In terms of defence, more theoretical cooperation took place. Many agreements culminated in October 1983 with the first 'Peninsula Shield' joint exercises. This event proved to be a harbinger of numerous such joint military exercises of the years, even if the GCC Peninsula Shield Force "has amassed a less than spectacular record of performance."[347] Indeed, the force has never been anything other than a paper tiger and is acknowledged as a military failure.[348]

In the Qatari context, the GCC led by Saudi Arabia sporadically sought to intervene between Qatar and Bahrain to calm the escalating tensions over the disputes. The 1986 dispute over the Fasht Al Dibal reef, claimed by both sides and which sparked minor skirmishes, was innovatively settled by Saudi Arabia when they dredged the entire reef.[349]

The notion that the GCC could in a meaningful way provide Qatar or its other member states with some kind of security blanket is illusory. Its approach to military matters and especially issues of interoperability are still resolutely bilateral with America, to choose one key concern. As long as America is providing the overriding security for the Gulf States, the GCC will not be able to – and nor will it need to – evolve into anything like a tight-knit, effective organisation.

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[345] Ramazani quoted in Joseph Wright Twinam, *The Gulf, Cooperation and the Council* (Washington DC: Middle East Policy Council, 1992), p.110.

[346] Ibid., p.109.

[347] Glenn P. Kuffel, "The Gulf Cooperation Council's Peninsular Shield Force," (Newport, RI: US Naval War College, 2000), p.i.

[348] This is a widespread understanding confirmed with conversations with numerous experts and at least one GCC Ambassador to the UK.
"'GCC Minus One': Can Saudi Arabia Really Be Sidelined in Gulf Defence?," *Gulf States Newsletter*, no. 777 (10 March 2006).

[349] "The Bahrain-Qatar Border Dispute: The World Court Decision, Part 1," in *The Estimate* (23 March 2001).

## A New Era Emerging

### A Domestic Focus

On 31 May 1977 Hamad Bin Khalifah Al Thani was appointed Heir Apparent and Minister of Defence. But it was not until the mid-1980s that he began to exert a significant impact on policy when he led a new generation in the elite who found, as the decade progressed, their hands ever more on the tiller.

After over a decade on the throne, Khalifah Bin Hamad Al Thani, like his predecessors, began to delegate more power to the Heir Apparent. One commentator suggests that by the mid-1980s "Hamad had become the prominent figure in Qatari politics and was largely recognised as the effective ruler of Qatar."[350] Defining exactly when Hamad Bin Khalifah became particularly influential is difficult to judge, but the intrinsic policy disposition of the two men is clear and is instructive. When Khalifah Bin Hamad was clearly in charge in the 1970s he operated quietly under Saudi Arabia's auspices. While he enlarged Qatar's foreign relations, he seldom conducted any unusual or surprising policy ventures, and never conducted any that would undermine his close Saudi relations. Hamad Bin Khalifah, by contrast, when he became unquestionably in charge displayed a pervasive desire to shock, court publicity, and undertake policies unilaterally with little or no consultation of regional neighbours. For example, the Emir's 1985 decision to phone UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar beseeching him to visit both Tehran and Baghdad amid the extreme Gulf tensions at that time, appears to have more in common with a typical Hamad policy than a Khalifah policy.[351] While it may be too big a jump to suggest that Hamad was the force behind this incident, the consensus was emerging that Hamad was accruing power quickly, as the British Ambassador's confidential annual report for 1986 notes:

> A further decline in Sheikh Khalifah's drive and decisiveness in 1987 seems almost inevitable. The days when he was the sole arbiter...are apparently over. Sheikh Hamad, the Crown Prince, takes more and more decisions without first obtaining the approval of his father. He will gain increasing prominence here.[352]

[350] Uzi Rabi, "Qatar's Relations with Israel: Chellenging Arab and Gulf Norms," *The Middle East Journal* vol. 63, no. 3 (2009): p.444.
[351] Searight, "Special Report on Qatar (3) : This Proud Aloof Nation."
[352] Walker, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1986," p.12.

The British Ambassador's annual review for 1987 refers to Hamad continuing to "consolidate his authority, especially over the North Field project and military procurement, through his small network of relatively competent and honest young Qataris executives who face a difficult task in clearing up the inefficient administration."[353] The next year's report continues noting that this delegation of authority to Hamad had reached "an apparently irretrievable extent....Speculation is now even heard about Sheikh Khalifah's own position."[354]

Aside from prosaic changes such as the change from the Islamic lunar calendar to the Gregorian tax year calendar, deeper change benefitting Hamad Bin Khalifah was crystallised in 1989 in a Cabinet reshuffle.[355] Growing difficulties between Khalifah Bin Hamad and his brother Khalid Bin Hamad, the Minister of the Interior and one of the most important Qataris, prompted this first wholesale Ministerial shake up since 1972. Hamad Bin Jassem Al Thani, the Crown Prince's closest confidant, became Minister of Municipalities, a position to which was soon added control of water and electricity. This position meant that Hamad Bin Jassem was the key Minister for deciding who received what land. In the oil era land was one of the key ways wealth was transferred from the state to the individual. Given that all Qataris are entitled to be given land on which to build a house, this land can technically be in downtown Doha or in the depths of Qatar's inhospitable hinterland. The power to weigh-in on this decision gave Hamad Bin Jassem significant influence. Indeed, a former Ambassador based in Qatar in the 1980s noted that the bargaining that Hamad Bin Jassim took place during these years set up support for Hamad Bin Khalifah's subsequent coup in 1995.[356]

Hamad Bin Jassem was joined by a number of younger Ministers in the 1989 cabinet reshuffle, which also saw the creation of the Supreme Council for Planning under Hamad Bin Khalifah's control.[357] This 1989 Ministerial shake up is best summed up as Crown Prince

[353] Nixon, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1987."
[354] "Qatar: Annual Review for 1988."
[355] *Gulf States Qatar*. Oxresearch Daily Brief Service (19 September 1989).
[356] Personal Interview: Former Ambassador to Qatar, 30 November 2010.
[357] *Gulf States Qatar*.

Hamad taking more power from the older generation and using the appointment of a new generation of Ministers to add some dynamism to an arcane and corrupt system.[358]

'Supreme Councils' were to be a feature of Qatar under Hamad Bin Khalifah where power is centralised under the control of one small council. Preeminent in their fields (planning but later health, education, judicial etc.) control of these councils rested with Hamad Bin Khalifah or a trusted advisor or family member and was another way he could consolidate and expand his power. Such actions in the late 1980s set the stage for the next decade with Crown Prince Hamad and his coterie of advisors, relations, and allies being secreted ever more into the elite as he formalised and consolidated power. Initially, concerns over Qatar's basic security needed to be settled.

## Regional and International Relations

US-Qatari relations before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 are best described as uneventful and cordial until 1988 as American oil and economic interests were limited while Qatar looked mostly to France and the UK on military matters.[359] However, in June 1988 someone at the US Embassy in Bahrain watching coverage of the Qatari National Day parade noticed several Stinger anti-aircraft missiles on parade.[360] It transpired that Qatar had bought twelve such missiles off the black market. US authorities, concerned about this illegal activity and proliferation, pressured to Qatar to return the weapons to America and pass on the details of their origins. Several protests from the US Ambassador Joseph Ghougassian and a visit from the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Richard Murphy were unable to resolve this issue. With no economic or military aid going to Qatar, America had no leverage.

It is not surprising that Crown Prince Hamad, the Minister of Defence, refused to hand over the weapons. While the Qatari elite will not have liked America's demands, crucially they

[358] "Qatar: Valedictory Annual Review for 1989."
[359] Twinam, *The Gulf, Cooperation and the Council*, P.97.
[360] Elaine Sciolino, "Qatar Rejects U.S. Demand for Return of Ilicit Stingers," *New York Times*(28th June 1988)

were angry at America's willingness to sell seventy such missiles and fourteen launchers to Bahrain in December 1987 and none to Qatar.[361]

Qatar's defence for their procurement of the Stingers stated that they needed them against any Iranian threat (the motivation which Bahrain used). Yet this cut little ice in Washington given that it was widely believed that the Qataris bought the weapons from Iran in the first place. With an impasse reached, relations remained frosty until Iraq invaded Kuwait and the second Gulf war ensued.

Qatar played a role in the Gulf war commensurate to its size and military capabilities. The only action of consequence for the Qatari military occurred at the Battle of Khafji in late January 1991. Supported by US air power, Qatari and Saudi land forces retook the Saudi town of Khafji which had been taken by Iraq mechanised forces in a night-time attack. This victory was important at the time in terms of restoring Arab pride and morale in obtaining a victory and it continues to this day to be a source of some Qatari pride. Indeed, as Rabi puts it, "for the first time, Qatar had a military victory of its own to its credit...The media glorified the "crushing defeat" dealt to Iraq...[the] Qatari myth was in the making."[362] Yet in reality this battle was "pre-eminently an [American] airpower victory."[363]

Overall, it is difficult to place enough importance on the invasion of Kuwait as a driver for the subsequent actions of Qatar; a notion related to the British Ambassador at the time who noted "The Amir and the Crown Prince have made much of the way in which the invasion of Kuwait has changed permanently Qatar's political alignments."[364] The analogy between Kuwait – a small, intrinsically defenceless, hydrocarbon-rich country surrounded by larger states with whom they have sporadically antagonistic relationships – was not lost on Qatar's elite.

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[361] Michael Wines and Doyle McManus, "Gulf State of Qatar Gets Stinger Missiles," *Los Angeles Times* 31 March 1988.
[362] Uzi Rabi, "Qatar," in *Middle East Contemporary Survey*, ed. Ami Ayalon (Boulder; Colorado: Westview Press, 1991), p.606.
[363] James Titus, "The Battle of Khafji: An Overview and Preliminary Analysis," (College of Aerospace Doctrine, Research, and Education; Air University, September 1996), p.1. Although this paper was written by someone wedded to the US Air Force, the critical importance of Air Power in the Battle of Khafji cannot be overstated and is a theme throughout the literature focusing on this battle.
[364] Boyce, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1990."

In the aftermath of the Gulf war the GCC States recognised the failure of the GCC as a security structure. But while the Qatari Foreign Minister Mubarak Ali Al Khatir noted that that they needed to "modernize [Qatar's] defence means and coordinate…military structures" nothing came of this.[365] After the idea of stationing Syrian and Egyptian troops in the GCC – the Damascus Declaration – predictably wilted, Qatar like Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE turned to America. [366] After allowing the US to use Qatari territory in the run-up to Operation Desert Storm, Qatar's opening of relations with Israel convinced America to enter negotiations with Qatar for security agreements.[367]

On 23 June 1992 Qatar and America concluded the agreement "that provided for U.S. access to Qatari bases, pre-positioning of United States material, and combined military exercises."[368] The Qataris subsequently built the Al Udeid military base at a cost of $1 billion by 1996 to allow for the expansion of US forces of up to 10,000 troops and at least 140 aircraft. Al Udeid also served as "the region's main combat air-operations centre" for Iraq and Afghanistan operations.[369] A second important base – Camp As Sayliyah – was completed in August 2000, costing more than $100m and is the "largest pre-positioning facility of U.S. equipment in the world" and is the command centre for US Central Command (CENTCOM).[370]

These US ties came at a critical moment. Not only was Qatar's Saudi relationship deteriorating rhetorically, but on 30 September 1992 Saudi troops or tribes loyal to Saudi Arabia attacked a border post at Al Khaffus in Qatar territory killing one Qatari soldier, one Egyptian soldier in the Qatari army, and capturing a third.[371] A Saudi tribal Sheikh was also killed according to some reports. Qatar immediately and publically cancelled its 1965 border agreement with Saudi Arabia and withdrew 200 Qatari soldiers from the GCC Peninsula

[365] Quoted in Rabi, "Qatar," p.606.
[366] See Gwenn Okruhlik and Patrick J Conge, "The Politics of Border Disputes on the Arabian Peninsula," *International Journal* 54, no. 230 (1999): p.234. for a brief explanation.
[367] Mark Fineman, "U.S. Has Precious, yet Precarious, Ties with Qatar," *Los Angeles Times* 22 December 2002. Salman, "An Old Dialogue with the Emir of Qatar in the Context Of: Israel Being a Gatekeeper of Arab Affiliation with Washington."
[368] Jeremy M Sharp, "Qatar: Background and U.S. Relations," in *CRS Report for Congress* (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, 17 March 2004), p.8.
[369] Ibid., p.9.
[370] Ibid.
[371] *Saudi Troops Attack Border Post; 2 Killed*, Paris Afp (FBIS-NES-92-191 on 1992-10-01, 30 September 1992).

Shield force.[372] Egyptian mediation calmed the situation, but only temporarily. In 1993 and 1994 more deadly border clashes took place and Qatar boycotted the GCC Annual Summit in 1994 and refused to sign a mutual security pact.[373] Okruhlik and Conge note that these Saudi-Qatar tensions

> were less about the land itself and more symptoms of the multi-layered tension between the two countries. It gave Qatar a pretext for expressing its bitterness over the Saudi Arabian hegemony within the GCC and Saudi Arabia a chance to express its displeasure over Qatar's independent manoeuvres.[374]

Relations remained bitter for decades. Al Jazeera's relentless sniping at Saudi Arabia was one of the factors that led to Riyadh removing its Ambassador, Hamad Al Tuwaimi, from Doha in September 2002.[375] The Ambassador returned in 2008 during a period of détente. Subsequently, the bilateral relations have improved markedly particularly with Al Jazeera's coverage of Saudi Arabia having been toned down.[376]

In addition to seeking US security guarantees, Qatar sought to vastly increase its international relations; a plan significantly motivated by its acrimonious Saudi relations. Moreover, beginning in the early 1990s, Qatar developed new international alliances that were starkly at odds with its previously predictable politics. Aside from the newly invigorated and deepened relations with America, contact was augmented with the Islamic Republic of Iran and the State of Israel. Trade deals, bilateral visits, military cooperation agreements, and discussions of importing water from Iran characterised the Iranian relationship. A thawing of frozen relations, discussions on selling LNG to Israel and opening of trade offices, signing aviation pacts, and elite visits were discussed with Israel.[377]

Neither relationship progressed as far as envisaged at the beginning. Neither the water nor the LNG deal went through and the plans were eventually dropped. Subsequently, relations

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[372] Gause III, *Oil Monarchies*, p.131.
*Gulf Security Force Withdrawn*, Paris Afp (FBIS-NES-92-193 on 1992-10-05, 5 October 1992).
[373] Cordesman, *Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and the UAE : Challenges of Security*, p.222.
Okruhlik and Conge, "The Politics of Border Disputes on the Arabian Peninsula," p.236.
[374] "The Politics of Border Disputes on the Arabian Peninsula," p.235.
[375] "Qatad and Saudi Agree to Agree Ahead of Summit," *Gulf States Newsletter*, no. 814 (28 September 2007).
[376] Worth, "Al Jazeera No Longer Nips at Saudis."
[377] Clyde Haberman, "Israel Seeks Deal with Qatar on Gas," ibid. 29 October 1993.
"Qatar, Israel Discuss Aviation Pact," *United Press International* 18 November 1995.

ebbed and flowed. With Israel after the triumph of a trade office opened in Doha in 1996, there were precious few successes. Qatar was immediately and consistently pressured to close the office by its allies who wanted to maintain the boycott of the Jewish State. Eventually, after the Israeli invasion of Gaza in 2008 in Operation Cast Lead, which drew withering Arab criticism, Qatar cut relations and the office was technically closed.

Iranian-Qatari relations have not been as dramatic. Defending wider Iranian interests in the UN Security Council, signing various trade agreements, and inviting Iran to the GCC Annual Summit in Doha in 2007 highlight Qatar's desire to ameliorate its Iran relations. Until the start of the Arab Spring the relationship remained relatively stable despite occasional crises such as when Iranian Revolutionary Guards attacked and looted Qatari rigs in its gas field in the mid-2000s.

Both sides derive benefit from maintaining a public facade of a strong, working relationship. For Iran it shows domestic and international communities that America and Saudi Arabia have failed to contain the Islamic Republic, while for Qatar it pays to keep Iran on side given their proximity and the fact that they share the world's largest gas field, a source of great wealth and concern for Qatar. Such logic overcomes deep perhaps even insurmountable differences on key issues and a latent fear and suspicion on both sides. In 2009 Qatar's then Foreign Minister, Hamad Bin Jassim Al Thani, summed up the bilateral relationship succinctly when he noted that "they lie to us and we lie to them."[378] Even taking into account concerns of one politician telling another what he wants to hear (and certainly the Americans would have been pleased to hear this from the Qatari Foreign Minister), these sentiments ring true.

It was not just Iranian relations that began evolving in the 1980s. A sign of things to come occurred in 1988 when Qatar established relations with the Soviet Union and China. Interestingly, Qatar did not wait for Saudi Arabia to recognise these countries as one might expect, but took a unilateral course of action. The British Ambassador at the time summed up this curious example as follows:

[378] "Us Embasy Cables: Qatari Prime Minister: 'Iranians Lie to Us'," *The Guardian* (28 November 2010)

> I detect the Crown Prince's hand behind surprising shifts in Qatar's relationship with the superpowers. Most observers had expected Qatar to wait for a Saudi lead before establishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and China. The decision to go ahead alone at this time probably reflected Qatar's concern at the dangers of appearing too closely identified with the high profile policy of the United States in the Gulf.[379]

Two factors stem immediately from this statement, which fits in perfectly to the thrust of emerging Qatari domestic political realities and long-term foreign policies. Firstly, at this stage Qatar was not that outspoken an American ally. If, therefore, the elite felt that even a modest association or imbalance whereby Qatar was overtly associated with America ought to be corrected, this has potentially huge implications for Qatar in the 1990s. For then when Qatar became one of the central locations for American forces and there were real, evident, and widely known commonalities of interest and relationships between Qatar and America, if one uses the same logic, namely that Qatar must diversify its interests to avoid being too overtly seen as in one camp, this offers a powerful explanatory factor for Qatar's foreign policy explosion as the 1990s progressed.

Secondly, it is all but certain that this decision to recognise China and the Soviet Union was Hamad Bin Khalifah's decision and not his father the Emir's. Khalifah Bin Hamad's disposition became ever more cautious as the 1980s progressed to the point of a deep lack of inertia, a problem that Hamad Bin Khalifah was to counter with various ministerial changes. Moreover, Khalifah Bin Hamad's own foreign policy motives were, as identified by a former British Ambassador, to follow the GCC lead. It would be highly unlikely for him to have broken out of his train of thought for no apparent reason. Indeed, the next year's British Ambassadorial report notes that while the Soviet and Chinese Ambassadors are "charming" they essentially made no impact, so it is not even as if they were brought to Qatar with a particular discernible policy in mind.[380] Indeed, the timing is suspicious and these agreements were - if not initiated by the US Stinger missile debacle - at least speeded up because if it. In a different context in 1990 Qatar was similarly outspoken when it became the first GCC country to condemn Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.[381] While this may seem a sensible reaction for Qatar, perhaps seeing worrying analogies in the invasion, it is

[379] Nixon, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1988."
[380] "Qatar: Valedictory Annual Review for 1989."
[381] Boyce, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1990."

nevertheless another indicator of a sea-change in their foreign policy. Far from their traditional 'wait and see' approach, Qatar was becoming far more forthright with its own opinions.

Qatar also reinvigorated its support for the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in the late 1980s. A member of the organisation since 1971 and a generous contributor to this and other causes when oil revenues allowed, Hamad Bin Khalifah attended the NAM summit in Belgrade in 1988.[382] This move was to reiterate Qatar's position as part of a wider group of states and thus not necessarily beholden to, for example, Saudi Arabia. 1989 also saw a rash of states being recognised by Qatar including Cuba, Peru, Poland, and Yugoslavia and in 1990 Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania. Lastly, following Kuwait's lead, Qatar forgave the debts of several African and Arab countries (Cameroon, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Somalia, Tunisia, Uganda) in 1989; another effort aimed at boosting Qatar's non-aligned credentials.[383]

While opportunity accounts for many of these occurrences – particularly the opening of relations – it is difficult to disagree with the UK's Ambassador to Qatar who described these actions "as a signal of its [Qatar's] wish not to appear beholden to the West or subservient to Saudi leadership, Qatar established diplomatic relations with a curious range of countries of no relevance to its needs."[384]

Though Crown Prince Hamad – the de facto leader as the 1990s wore on – was pursuing new, modernising strategies, this did not prevent an unenlightened reaction to the presentation of a petition to the ruler in May 1992. Fifty-four prominent citizens presented a petition demanding "free parliamentary elections, a written constitution, and the expansion of personal and political freedoms" to Emir Khalifah Bin Hamad.[385] The reaction

[382] Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, "The Gulf States and South-South Cooperation, 1961-1990: Contradictions and Commonalities," in *BRISMES Annual Conference 2012* (LSE2012).
Nixon, "Qatar: Valedictory Annual Review for 1989."
[383] *Government Cancels Debts for 10 Countries*, Paris Afp (FBIS-NES-90-195 on 1992-10-09, 7 October 2012).
[384] "Qatar: Valedictory Annual Review for 1989."
[385] Ibrahim, "54 Qatar Citizens Petition Emir for Free Elections."

was to ignore their demands, arrest some of those involved, stop them from travelling abroad, and tap their phones according to the New York Times.[386]

It is difficult to analyse this reaction because of a lack of sources of analysis on this incident. Certainly by 1993 Crown Prince Hamad was ever more "entrenching" his power and his closest confidant, Hamad Bin Jassem was "the third most powerful man in the state."[387] Yet with a petition directly addressed to the Emir himself and given his conservative tendencies, it is tempting to conclude that the reaction stems more from Emir Khalifah Bin Hamad than Crown Prince Hamad. This is not to say that at this stage the Crown Prince would necessarily have engaged in a much more enlightened policy but that some kind of appeasement would fit more closely his overall thrust of policy; moreover, as soon as he came to power he did in fact undertake some of these demanded actions including instituting Municipal elections.

The Cabinet reshuffle in 1992 got rid of "those Ministers who had long ceased attending their offices" and, like the 1989 reshuffle, was to breathe new life in the Qatari Government and for Hamad Bin Khalifah to install key allies.[388] Abdullah Bin Hamad Al Attiyah played a key part in Qatar's evolution expertly shepherding the evolution of Qatar's gas industry. A close friend of Hamad Bin Khalifah, he was given charge of the new Industry and Energy Ministry and made head of the board for Qatar General Petroleum Company (QPGC), as it was then known.

When Crown Prince Hamad Bin Khalifah assumed power in June 1995 things began to overtly change. When Emir Khalifah Bin Hamad was in Tunisia, he received a phone call from Doha informing him that his son was planning to seize power. Scoffing at this highly plausible event, he chose to continue with his plans and flew on to Geneva. When he landed, he was informed that his son had been successful.

Immediately, Khalifah Bin Hamad began to rally support in the Gulf. All regional leaders initially supported his case, none of them wanting to set the precedent of a son successfully usurping his father in a Monarchical region. Hamad Bin Khalifah was initially not recognised

[386] Ibid.
[387] Wogan, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1993."
[388] Graham Boyce, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1992," ed. Middle East Department Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: FCO, 12th January 1993).

as his father was ostentatiously received with full honours in Riyadh and Abu Dhabi where he decamped taking over seventy rooms in Abu Dhabi's Intercontinental Hotel as a temporary headquarters "until he returned to power."[389]

At least two coups were attempted to restore Khalifah Bin Hamad. Saudi Arabia is suspected to have been involved in both coups. In the first attempt in late 1995 it is rumoured that the Syrian Government sought to use Lebanese Druze launched from Saudi Arabia to topple the new Emir. [390] If indeed this attempt occurred, it failed. A more sizable coup allegedly took place the following year. An estimated force of two thousand mercenaries led by a former French Special Forces commander of Khalifah Bin Hamad's personal guard were accused of being supported and supplied by Saudi Arabia and other local powers. On 20 February 1996 over one hundred people including army officers and police were arrested in Doha, the Emiri guard was mobilised, and the farcically-organised coup was put down.[391]

After becoming Emir, like those successful coup plotters before him - notably his father - Hamad Bin Khalifah sought to placate the citizenry though he did far more than his predecessors. Indeed, he consciously began to remake ruling politics in Qatar with a more progressive slant. He decoupled the position of Prime Minister from the position of Emir and separated the state and ruling family's finances; no doubt a pointed move considering his father retained an estimated $3 to $12 billion of Qatar's finances in his personal accounts in Europe.[392] The Doha Stock Market was established in June 1995 and opened in May 1997 on the IMF's advice, the 'liberalising' tenor of which chimed with the thrust of Qatar's policies.[393] Moreover, new legislation was introduced facilitating foreign investment and state assets were privatised beginning with the creation of the Qatar Electricity and Water Company taking control of power generation and desalination plants in February 1998.[394]

No Minister for Information was appointed in the 1996 Cabinet reshuffle and the Ministry that was responsible for censorship was officially disbanded in March 1998. Al Jazeera, the satellite TV station, began broadcasting in 1996 as a further sign of a new era of openness.

[389] Cordesman, *Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and the UAE : Challenges of Security*, p.223.
[390] Pipes, "Interview with Hamad Bin Jassim Bin Jabr Al Thani."
[391] Mary Anne Weaver, "Qatar: Revolution from the Top Down," *National Geographic Magazine* March 2003.
[392] "Qatar: Political Modernisation," *Oxford Analytics Daily Brief Service* (03 July 1998).
[393] Wright, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1997."
[394] Rathmell and Schulze, "Political Reform in the Gulf: The Case of Qatar," p.53.

Indeed, it is difficult to over emphasise the ground-breaking role of Al Jazeera. Never before in the Middle East has such an open news source been allowed to operate. The BBC attempt to start BBC Arabic was based in Saudi Arabia and predictably soon failed (though this fortuitously gave Al Jazeera a BBC-trained cadre of journalists). Bahrain TV, which showed one hour of CNN per night in the early 1990s, while allowing citizens to see balanced reports on Israel for the first time, had no overt focus on the Gulf or Middle East.[395]

He announced that the Municipal Council, until then directly appointed, would be an elected body. More surprisingly, it was announced that woman could vote stand for office; a first in the Gulf.[396] Its mandate was not immediately set and the date for the election slipped from 1996, to early 1997, to 09 March 1998; International Women's Day (though this date too was missed). Eventually in 1999 two hundred and eighty candidates registered, eight of whom were women, for the twenty-nine seats. It is estimated that between 79 per cent and 95 per cent of registered Qataris voted. No women were voted into office.[397] Lambert continues to note that this election spurred "a countrywide phenomenon of government officials replacing appointed bodies with elected ones" including direct elections for the Chamber of Commerce.[398]

## An Overt International Focus

These progressive policies were mirrored internationally. While there were sporadic attempts by Qatar to mediate with Iraq and Kuwait; in Palestine; and with American-led Iraqi sanctions in 1993 and 1999, it was not until after the new millennium that Qatar engaged systematically in public mediation.[399]

In 2003 the former Qatari Foreign Minister Hamad Bin Jassem noted that Qatar sought to mediate between the US-led coalition and Iraq as well as between the UK-led international community and Libya concerning its weapons programme.[400] This was far from the last time

[395] Geraldine Brooks and Tony Horwitz, "Shaken Sheiks," *Wall Street Journal* 29 December 1990.
[396] Jennifer Lambert, "Political Reform in Qatar: Participatino, Legitimacy, and Security," *Journal Essay; Middle East Policy Council*.
[397] Ibid.
[398] Ibid.
[399] Rabi, "Qatar's Relations with Israel: Chellenging Arab and Gulf Norms."
"Eiu Country Report: Kuwait," (London: The Economist Intelligence Unit, 1993).
"World Briefing," *New York Times* 10 March 1999.
[400] "Qatar Discloses Mediation in Iraq, Libya and Sudan," *ArabicNews.com*(1 January 2004)

that Qatar would involve itself with Libya. Qatar partnered again with another Western nation (primarily France, in this case) in 2007 with mediation with Libya to secure the release of six Bulgarian nurses accused by Colonel Gaddafi of infecting hundreds of Libyan children with AIDS.[401] The deal involved the establishment of a $460m fund to which Qatar contributed.[402] It was revealed in 2007 that the Qatari Government lobbied Scotland's First Minister Alex Salmond for the release of the Lockerbie bomber, Abdelbaset Al Megrahi. This was on behalf of the Gaddafi Government during discussions with the Hamad Bin Jassim-led Qatar Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF), the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA).[403] Also with support from Libya, Qatar mediated sporadically successful accords to normalise relations between Sudan and Chad in 2009[404] and Qatar's good offices and a Qatari airplane facilitated the release of 100 Moroccan prisoners captured in the Polisario conflict in 2004.[405]

In addition to a brief mediation effort between Eritrea and Sudan in November 2008, the longest mediation that Qatar has engaged in has been in Darfur, Sudan. Started in 2008 and on-going to this day, Qatar has spent a reputed two billion dollars and considerable time in attempting to find some kind of mediated settlement to this issue.[406] No resolution has been affected as yet and talks are technically on-going with 'Darfur Protocol' signs seemingly perennially adorning the lobbies of five star hotels in Doha. Lastly in Africa, Qatar mediated a border dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea in 2010, though it is interesting to note that Qatar's building of relations with Eritrea and Al Jazeera's reporting was one of the factors that caused Ethiopia to cut diplomatic ties to Qatar in 2008.[407]

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[401] "Libya Details Medic Release Deal," *BBC News*
[402] "Libya Says Czechs and Qatar Paid into Hiv Children Fund," *Reuters*(28 July 2007)
[403] Angus Macleod, Peter Jones, and David Robertson, "Qatar Raised Al-Megrahi Release During Talks with Alex Salmond," *The Times* 4 September 2009.
[404] "Qatar Speaks About Efforts to Hold Sudan Chad Summit," *Sudan Tribune*(11 July 2009)
[405] "Qatar Mediates Morocco Prisoner Release," *Al Jazeera*(13 February 2004)
[406] For an overview of Qatar's mediation in respect to Darfur see David B Roberts, "Qatari Mediation," in *Gulf Research Centre Conference* (Cambridge, UK 2010). And Kamrava, "Mediation and Qatari Foreign Policy." Interview with Journalist Focusing on Qatari Mediation, 27 September 2012.
[407] "Qatar Mediating Eritrea-Djibouti Border Dispute," *Middle East Online*(7 June 2010)
"Ethiopia Breaks Off Diplomatic Relations with Qatar," *New York Times* 21 April 2008.

In 2006 Qatar donated $50m to the newly elected Hamas-led Government.[408] This was a part of improving Qatari-Hamas relations, which stemmed from close elite-level relations between the Qatari Emir and Hamas leader Khaled Mishaal. Qatar sought to use this relationship later in the year to attempt to broker a unity government, but was unsuccessful.[409] Similarly, Qatar used its relations with Israel to attempt to mediate with Hamas, but this too failed with Tzipi Livni, then Israel's Foreign Minister, refusing to negotiate until basic preconditions were met by Hamas.[410] Also in late 2012 the Qatari Emir became the first international leader to visit Gaza since Hamas' takeover; a startling move even for Qatar's energetic and surprising foreign policy.[411]

Qatar's best known mediation success occurred in the Levant with Lebanon. Qatar succeeded where scores of interlocutors failed and managed to secure an agreement ending 18 months of political deadlock that some feared was teetering towards a new civil war.[412] Many view the Qatar-shepherded agreement as being favourable to Hezbollah. Not only was Hezbollah given eleven portfolios in the Government giving them veto power over legislation, but their militia was not disbanded as some wanted but left intact in the guise of perennial resistor to Israel.[413] Yet these empirical facts need context. Before the agreement Hezbollah quite clearly had power exceeding its officially sanctioned remit. The fact that it could so quickly and with relative ease bring swathes of Beirut to a complete halt outmuscling the police and even the Army at times in the run up to the Doha-led initiatives, demonstrates that with this agreement Qatar brought their *de jure* power in line with their *de facto* power.

Elsewhere in the region, Qatar sought to mediate in the Houthi-Yemeni civil war beginning in May 2007. Qatar's intervention and promise of significant aid for reconstruction secured a quick ceasefire within two months. A peace treaty was signed on 02 February 2008. Yet a closer look reveals the seeds of its eventual failure. The declared ceasefire was never really

[408] "Qatar Gives $50m to Palestinians," *BBC News*(17 April 2006)
[409] "Qatar Siad to Give $50m in Aid to Hamas-Led Government," *Haaretz*(17 April 2006)
[410] Herb Keinon, "Fm Refuffs Qatari Hamas Mediation Offer," *The Jerusalem Post*(13 February 2006)
[411] David B Roberts, "Why Is Qatar Mucking around in Gaza?," *Foreign Policy*(25 October 2012)
[412] Alia Ibrahim, "Despair to Dancing in Qatar," *The Washington Post* 26 May 2008.
[413] Paul Salem and Marina Ottaway, "Hope in the Levant " in *Middle East Programme Web Commentary* (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace May 2008).

implemented by either side and, as Kamrava notes, the rebel movement was never a monolithic block with whom agreements could be agreed and monitored.[414] Fighting eventually escalated with a full Government assault taking place in mid-2009 just after Yemen's President Ali Abdullah Saleh declared the Qatari mediation to be dead.[415] Another agreement was signed a year later in mid-2010, but this too was short lived. Thanks in no small part to this acrimonious history of agreements, promises, and failures, Qatar pulled out of the GCC-led mediation in mid-2012, seemingly no longer able to put up with Saleh's duplicity.

Aside from widespread changes in traditional Qatari foreign policies, the new elite also undertook a raft of new approaches in a range of spheres including commerce, energy, and in terms of what could be described as softer policies.

Qatar's economy changed significantly with the advent and consolidation of power by the new elite. Their decision to focus on Qatar's gas reserves took over a decade to come to fruition, but eventually paid dividends. Qatar became the world's biggest LNG exporter in 2006 and remains far and away the world's largest LNG supplier.[416] The gas-derived revenue was one of the central factors allowing Qatar to undertake the diverse and expensive range of new policies examined in this thesis. For example, it was after nearly a decade of LNG revenues that Qatar established its SWF, the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) in 2005. This fund quickly became one of the most recognisable funds in the world and in the late 2000s and 2010s became famous for taking often large stakes in blue chip companies such as Volkswagen and Porsche, Harrods, and Shell. With vast amounts of money coming into Qatar from LNG, the QIA was a necessary mechanism to spend this cash. Whether through property or equity, its two main concerns, the QIA plans to invest Qatar's earnings as a safety net and as a form of economic diversification. Compared to other SWFs the QIA is unusually publicity-hungry and can be seen as contributing to the business-savvy brand for Qatar; seeking to boost its positive notoriety and speak to Qatar's business acumen in key financial capitals of the world.

[414] Kamrava, "Mediation and Qatari Foreign Policy," p.550.
[415] Ibid.
[416] For a more detailed look at Qatar's gas ventures see the Gas Policies section in the Analysis chapter.

The QIA is but one of the mechanisms that can be understood as adding to and propagating a new brand to boost Qatar's soft power. Such power rests on the power of attraction, according to soft power's modern intellectual father, Joseph Nye.[417] In this light, various other Qatari policies can be seen as key fonts of Qatar's soft power. Facilitated by LNG revenues, Qatar's relentless desire to host a range of world-level sporting events (football, athletics, golf, tennis, etc.) is a primary method of boosting Qatar's attraction across the world. Even those sceptical about the notion of soft power cannot deny that such sporting events are an effective method for Qatar to publicise itself in what is usually a positive and effective manner.[418] Similarly, Qatar's pursuit of international acclaim in the world of culture with the hosting of film premieres, film festivals, and world-class museums aims similarly aims to publicise Qatar in a positive manner.

Of more recognisable relevance to building a brand is Qatar's pursuit of the international business market. As well as the QIA being a leader of the brand, billions of dollars have been sunk into boosting Qatar's development of Doha as a centre for the MICE industry. In addition to the tourist infrastructure such as top-class hotels and recreation areas, Qatar has built two world-class conference centres, and a world-spanning and award winning airline, Qatar Airways. An almost bottomless budget to host the largest and most prestigious conferences in the world means that Qatar's recognition has increased significantly alongside the traffic coming through Doha. Indeed, Qatar has attracted some of the largest conferences in the world including the 2001 World Trade Centre talks and the 2012 COP 18 conference held in Education City's conference centre.

Aside from being the location of one of Qatar's large conference centres, Education City is the location of several America and British University campuses. These Universities based in Doha are, alongside New York University in Abu Dhabi, indisputably the best Universities in the Middle East. These institutions are part of the plan to encourage and facilitate the transition to a knowledge-based economy in Qatar. Other parts of the Qatar Foundation (QF), the overarching body behind Education City, include Qatar Science and Technology

[417] Nye, *Soft Power : The Means to Success in World Politics*, p.6.

[418] This is not to say that the effects of Qatar's sporting promotion are universally positive. There is a negative discourse to be addressed regarding, for example, Qatar's hosting of the 2022 World Cup either from disgruntled often Western-based journalists who do not like the World Cup going to Qatar or from the human-rights angle in terms of the rights of the workers building the stadia.

Park (QSTP), a centre for innovation, research and design designed to provide an outlet for Education City students and to burnish Doha's image as a hub of innovation and opportunities for businesses.

The QF also has charitable side with various aid programmes run by its 'Reach out to Asia' programme and it funds educational innovation at its WISE Awards, which are often referred to as the Nobel Prize of education.[419] Outwith QF the Qatari State has given aid to a variety of causes over the years. Perhaps most famously, Qatar gave $100 million to various institutions in and around New Orleans to help with the aftermath Hurricane Katrina in 2005 including Xavier University, America's first black Catholic University.[420]

Such aid programmes and initiatives follow a long line of similar programmes throughout the Gulf initially led by Kuwait in the 1960s and 1970s.[421] As noted, donating aid is no stranger to Qatar's foreign policy repertoire as with the uptick in such activities after Khalifah took power in 1972. Yet under Hamad Bin Khalifah Qatar had significantly greater financial resources and its aid spending increased accordingly. While detailed figures going back to Khalifah Bin Hamad's rule are unavailable, from 2005-2011 Qatar's overall aid grew over 2000 per cent from $121 million to over £2.5billion.[422]

While the energy, sporting, education, cultural, and MICE policies evolved over time, Qatar's foreign policy stance in the Arab Spring changed swiftly. Whereas previously Qatar had a reputation that it courted as something of an inoffensive state – a facet that proved useful for its mediation – in the Arab Spring it quickly became a partisan state, clearly and proudly supporting one side over others. This support was most clearly evident in the Libyan revolution where Qatar supported the anti-Gaddafi rebels in a variety of ways.[423] Qatar like other states such as the UAE were hailed by many for their support as the international

[419] Sean Coughlan, "Madhav Chavan Wins Education 'Nobel Prize'," *BBC News*(13 November 2012)
[420] Stephanie Strom, "Qatar Grants Millions in Aid to New Orleans," *New York TImes* 2 May 2006.
[421] Ulrichsen, "The Gulf States and South-South Cooperation, 1961-1990: Contradictions and Commonalities," p.4.
[422] "Qatar Foreign Aid Report 2010-2011," (2011)
[423] Margaret Coker, Sam Dagher, and Charles Levinson, "Tiny Kingdom's Huge Role in Libya Draws Concern," *The Wall Street Journal*(17 October 2011)

community largely came together to support the ouster of Colonel Gaddafi. Qatar took a similarly partisan if not as aggressive approach to supporting anti-Assad forces in Syria.[424]

Elsewhere in the aftermath of the regime-changes Qatar sought to expand its support by whatever means possible. Particularly in Tunisia and Egypt this meant funnelling cash and material support to gain influence via the Muslim Brotherhood. Qatar's ties with the Brotherhood are mostly tactical; the Qatari elite have no great ideological affiliation to pursue. Qatar has used long standing links via key members of the Brotherhood being based in Doha to support the wider group, but the reality of the political situation is that given the fragmentation of politics, the Brotherhood are the single biggest, most cohesive party. Initially, Qatar established particularly strong ties with the Egyptian elite, led by former President Morsi. Yet such overt support has proven to be divisive. In addition to burning Qatari flags and increasing anti-Qatari rhetoric, Al Jazeera's share of viewers began slipping because of its perceived pro-Brotherhood tenancies.[425] This is an unwelcome turn of events for Qatar, a country that is more used to being feted for its support than jeered.[426]

[424] "Syria Crisis: Qatar Handing Embassy over to Opposition," *BBC News*(13 February 2013)
[425] Regan Doherty and Peter Apps, "Rising Power Qatar Stirs Unease among Some Mideast Neighbors," *Reuters*(12 February 2013)
"Must Do Better," *The Economist* 12 January 2013.
[426] Worth, "Qatar, Playing All Sides, Is a Non Stop Mediator."

# Chapter 4: Analysis

The central concern of this analysis is to understand the reasons for the significant changes in key Qatari policies - most of them externally-focusing in nature - that became increasingly evident from the early 1990s onwards. Now that the context of Qatar's politics, both internal and external, has been explained it is possible to focus on specific policies that can be described as being 'new' and a significant departure from their predecessors.

A careful reading of Chapter 3 highlights that a number of policies emerging from the beginning of the 1990s are demonstrably quantitatively and qualitatively different.

- The emergence of an American security umbrella
- Engaging in international mediation
- Seeking new, controversial international alliances and investment opportunities
- Founding and supporting Al Jazeera
- Significant support for new MICE industries, sporting events, cultural initiatives and educational policies
- Undertaking profoundly new gas policies
- Taking a leading role in the Arab Spring

A broadly qualitative approach for choosing the seven policies was used using the context provided in the historical analysis chapter, though there are evidently quantifiable aspects to some of the new policies. Each policy will be addressed in turn and the rationale for its place in this analysis clearly explained in terms of how each one unequivocally counts as an overtly 'new' policy. To do this the policies will be fleshed out in greater detail than in Chapter 3 to facilitate a deeper laying out of the ideas at play. Subsequently, using Nonneman's framework, these policies will be analysed in terms of their domestic, regional, and international determinants.

There are various ways that these policies could have been categorised. For example, the MICE Industries, sporting events, cultural and educational policies are dealt with under one title: 'soft policies.' The guiding rubric for this was that, firstly, while not identical, the fundamental rationales for why these policies were undertaken are similar, if not identical in certain ways. And secondly, to deal with each of these issues in separate chapters analysing

domestic, regional, and international factors determining why each one was pursued would have led to significant repetition.

Taken together these policies form a new canon of foreign policy devised and pursued by Hamad Bin Khalifah Al Thani and his coterie of allies and provide the evidence of the systematic changes that occurred in Qatar's recent history. They are the stark examples that provide the proof of the hypothesised change in tone, style, and content of Qatar's foreign policy, which emerged from the early 1990s. The analysis thus arrives at its crux: identifying the underlying motives and rationales for the changes.

Lastly, it must be noted that the State of Qatar has written down in one document a plan for the future of the country. The *Qatar National Vision 2030* is based on four pillars: human development; social development; economic development; and environmental development.[427] Many of the factors evaluated below stem from the breadth of the 2030 vision, particularly in terms of the domestic development of the state.

[427] "Qatar National Vision 2030".

## The American Security Umbrella

The American Security Umbrella that Qatar sought and received in the early 1990s was a profound change for two reasons. Firstly, not since the British left in 1971 had Qatar enjoyed such explicit guarantees of protection that included a foreign presence in Doha.[428] Qatar's decades under Saudi Arabia's suzerainty, which included understandings of tacit protection from the Kingdom, cannot compare to the British or US guarantees. The military capacity of Saudi Arabia despite its outlay on weapons and training over the decades remains questionable and was not of the required standard in the 1980s tanker war or in the face of Saddam Hussein's army in 1990. That Qatar acquired guarantees from the world's sole superpower gave its elite a comfort and a confidence that had not been known in Qatar for a generation.

Secondly, a relationship of this type with America was wholly new. In the 1970s and 1980s their relationship was characterised by apathy bordering on hostility because of America's Israeli stance and the late 1980s severing of diplomatic relations over the Singer missile debacle. Subsequently, Qatar became one of the most important American allies in the region if not the world as the prominence of the Gulf increased in the 1990s and 2000s. US guarantees of Qatar's basic security released Qatar from concerns over its small size and were a *sine qua non* of facilitating its diverse and controversial policies that were to come.

The American role in Qatar is governed primarily by two agreements. One covers the strategic bilateral relationship ("the US-Qatar Defence Cooperation Agreement") and another the mechanics of the working relationship ("Al Udeid Implementing Agreement").[429]

Doha International Air Base (or Camp Snoopy, as it came to be known, for people were forever peering into the base as it was so close to downtown Doha) was based at Doha International Airport from 1991 to 1993 and again from 1996 to 2003. After signing defensive agreements with America in 1992, Qatar built the Al Udeid air base at a cost of around $1 billion when Qatar did not even have a meaningful Air Force; clearly the base was built (finished in 1996) as a way to entice America into deeper cooperation even if it remains

[428] The British did not have a military base in Doha – though it did have RAF landing rights – but the noted presence of a British Agent in Doha was a clear sign of not only the British presence but of the deeper agreements and relations that stemmed from his presence.
[429] "Civilian Use of Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar," in *Cablegate* (Doha, Qatar: Wikileaks, 21 December 2008).

officially a Qatari Air Force base. In an example of overt military cooperation after Hamad Bin Khalifah took power, at the end of 1995 a joint Qatar-US exercise was pointedly undertaken "not even a dozen miles from the Saudi border."[430]

Al Udeid (or Camp Andy as it sometimes known) expanded significantly over the years, particularly after US access to the base was formalised in 2000.[431] Initially with only one runway (though it was the longest in the Middle East at 15,000 feet) the Qataris agreed in the late 2000s to pay for a second runway and a $400 million "state-of-the-art regional air operation centre" taking extra Qatari spending on the bases for America's use to at least $700 million.[432] The importance of the base increased in April 2003 when US Combat Air Operations moved from Prince Sultan Airbase in Saudi Arabia to Al Udeid and it became the central headquarters for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Indeed, it was regarded as "the principal power projection node in US plans to defend the Gulf" and 10-15 per cent of staff were relocated from Florida to Qatar.[433]

Opened in August 2000, Camp As Sayliyah was America's largest prepositioning hub in the world.[434] The base soon became the forward operating headquarters of the US Central Command, making it one of the most important US military bases in the world. Indeed, were MacDill Air Force Base in Florida, where Central Command's headquarters is based, to be struck by a natural disaster the temporary headquarters of CENTCOM would not move to another base in America but to Qatar.[435]

Qatar does not charge America for the use of these bases and has historically paid one of the highest proportions of US costs. According to the US Department of Defence's 'Allied

[430] Wogan, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1995."
[431] Christopher M Blanchard, "Qatar: Background and U.S. Relations," in *Congressional Research Service* (10 October 2007), p.10.
Al Udeid is sometimes referred to as Camp Andy, which technically refers to the large tent/semi-permanent building complex within Udeid was named after Master Sergeant Evander Earl 'Andy' Andrews who died in an accident on 2 October 2001 and is thought to be the first America fatality of Operation Enduring Freedom.
[432] Eric Schmitt, "Pentagon Construction Boom Beefs up Mideast Air Baese," *The New York Times* 18 September 2005.
Joseph LeBaron, "Subject: Scenesetter for Senator Kerry's Visit to Qatar," (Wikileaks, 08 February 2010).
[433] "Often the GCC Macerick, Qatar Gives 'Assured Access' to the Us Militart," *Gulf States Newsletter*, no. 723 (28 November 2003).
[434] Weaver, "Qatar: Revolution from the Top Down." "Are We Ready? Q&A with Rear Admiral Stephen H Baker," *CDI Terrorism Project* 12 September 2002.
[435] There is also at least one other U.S. military installation in Qatar – Falcon 78 – which is an ammunition storage facility. David Lepeska, "Us Envoy Looks Back to Qatar's Future," *The National* (11 December 2009).

Contributions to the Common Defence' reports, through direct and indirect means, Qatar paid 43 per cent of the US costs of stationing its troops in Qatar in 1999 and 61.2 per cent in 2004.[436]

## Domestic

Qatar has never been able to indigenously guarantee its own security. Its early history is a tale of rotating alliances and agreements under which the Sheikh in Qatar sought to guarantee his place in power, his descendant's rights to power, and some notion of territorial security with as little external interference as possible. Initially local powers such as the Al Khalifah from Bahrain or the Wahhabis from modern-day Saudi Arabia were sought out as a suzerain until the status quo shifted – as it frequently did – and the relationships were reorganised accordingly. The entrance of the Ottomans and the British Empire lent some stability to Qatar and the constant shifting of alliances slowed.

One effect of this pattern of seeking protection externally was that barring skirmishes with local tribes reasserting dominion over a reluctant village, a notable military victory at Wajbah, and sporadic skirmishes with local forces, rarely was a Qatari military force called on to defend the motherland. From the beginnings of the modern Qatari state in late eighteenth century through to the turn of the twentieth century, no regular, professional, trained military forces existed in Qatar. Subsequently, the Qatari police and then armed forces came into being under British tutelage in the late 1940s and early 1950s but at no time in the twentieth century was a Qatari meaningfully charged with the existential duty of protecting his country. Instead, while the British were dominant in the Gulf, claims and counterclaims were made to the British resident who wielded enormous power and would demand and receive reparations or unseat a tribal leader as he saw fit. After the British left in 1971, while there may have been some vestigial hope that the British may have returned in an emergency as they had after Kuwait's independence in 1961, by seeking such a close relationship with Saudi Arabia, Qatar removed the key source of potential concern, even if it did this at the expense of a degree of autonomy.

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[436] "2004 Statistical Compendium on Allied Contributions to the Common Defense," (US Department of Defence, 2004), p.B26.
"Report on Allied Contributions to the Common Defense," (US Department of Defence, March 2001), p.I9.
Unfortunately, the reports were discontinued after 2004.

Central to this decision was the personal proclivity of the Emir. For Khalifah Bin Hamad Al Thani who was content to sit under the auspices of Saudi Arabia, there was little problem. Without the capabilities to defend Qatar stemming from its small population, its larger neighbours, and a lack of an ethos of a professional military, Khalifah Bin Hamad decided come to an arrangement with Saudi Arabia. [437] However, Hamad Bin Khalifah repeatedly demonstrated that he could and would not rest under Saudi Arabia's aegis. His role perception as an emergent leader of Qatar could not be squared away with such a reliance on Saudi Arabia. Whether this intrinsic desire came from a man of a younger generation not willing to have his country and his rule be tethered to some degree by Saudi Arabia, a different appreciation of Qatar's security situation because his military background, or because of the increasing tensions in the early 1990s, for Hamad Bin Khalifah the result was the same. Unlike his father whose track record suggests he would have sought accommodation with Saudi Arabia, with no solution to Qatar's existential security concerns to be found in the domestic realm, Hamad Bin Khalifah resolved to acquire external guarantees.

## Regional

Khalifah Bin Hamad took power within six months of independence having already established an understanding with Saudi Arabia concerning Qatar's security.[438] During the 1970s and 1980s, as noted, he displayed deference to Riyadh and followed its policies closely. Evidently he was not perturbed by his and Qatar's relative lack of autonomy in perennially following Saudi's line. His stewardship of Qatar was energetic at the beginning when he sought to alter the ruling bargain in Qatar to alleviate himself from the stifling pressure of the Al Thanis. But despite hints of Nasserist-popularity in his past, he was a typical Gulf ruler: solid, slow to change, patriarchal, and conservative.

None of these things could be said about his son, Hamad Bin Khalifah. He too inherited a basic need to seek Qatar's security externally but it became increasingly obvious that he

[437] See Gause III, *Oil Monarchies*, p.119. and the subsequent chapter for a discussion of the security and foreign policy concerns for Gulf States, particularly in terms of the innate factors in the Gulf States militating against the effectiveness of indigenous Gulf defence.
[438] See earlier discussion of the 1965 border settlement and Khalifah's role therein.

would not kowtow to Saudi Arabia. Yet before the split with Saudi Arabia became evident, the 1990-1991 Gulf War was to have a deep effect upon Qatar.

When on 02 August 1990 Iraq invaded Kuwait and took over the small Gulf state within forty-eight hours, Qatar, like the rest of the region looked on in astonishment. For Qatar the parallels were obvious and deeply concerning. Qatar too was a small, energy rich country with a small native population. It was also flanked on two sides by much larger neighbours with whom it had a memory of belligerence and against whom it could not hope to offer any resistance.

Historically, the Qatari-Iranian relationship is not overly antagonistic bar a few proxy skirmishes centuries ago and sporadic threats emanating from Tehran. Nevertheless, Qatar like all Arab Gulf States harboured concerns about Iran, especially after the 1979 Revolution. This was, after all, a fervently anti-Monarchical, anti-Sunni, Revolutionary Shia regime, which stood accused of exporting terrorism and unrest to the Gulf States in the 1980s. Iran's military capabilities were also manifest. Worse still, Iran and Qatar shared the world's largest gas field together and by plumbing it Qatar opened another vector of concern in that it could potentially be accused (as Kuwait was) of extracting more than its fair share of the field. Indeed, the hugely expensive investment in the field would fundamentally change the dynamic of the Iranian relationship with Iran being contiguously joined to the source of Qatar's future wealth. In such a precarious position, Qatar understandably sought backup.

Other than Iran, aside from a few decades hiatus, Qatar's historical relations with Saudi Arabia were far from harmonious given the marauding Wahhabi raids in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. While concerns for Qatar's security vis-à-vis Iran and Saudi Arabia would have to be termed low probability, high impact events, that is exactly how one would have characterised the chances of Iraq invading Kuwait. Moreover, given the slow deterioration in relations in the early 1990s and the increased tensions around the border at Al Udeid culminating in the border skirmishes of the early 1990s, clearly the odds of some larger Saudi-Qatar conflagration were shortening. The Emir himself

notes this in an interview with Lebanese newspaper *As Safir* in 2009 where he describes Qatar as "not ready to face the burdens" of confronting Saudi Arabia in the early 1990s.[439]

Even were Qatar content to remain under the aegis of Saudi Arabia, between the Tanker Wars and the humiliating request for foreign troops for Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, it was evident that Saudi Arabia could not protect itself sufficiently. Also, prosaically but importantly, it must also be noted that as well as Qatar being open to hosting increasingly important US bases, simply put, the US had to leave Saudi Arabia in 2003. Indeed, the US-Saudi bilateral relationship was becoming deeply strained by the US troops based in the Kingdom.[440] In other words, this was another example of the regional situation facilitating a key feature of Qatari foreign policy.

As for the GCC Peninsula Shield, given the lack of interoperability, the problems with command and control, the poor training, and issues with control at elite levels, it too, like any Saudi guarantees, was of no meaningful use for Qatar.

Lastly, any notion that Qatar could use its oil and future gas wealth to buy support via foreign aid or such support was routed with Kuwait's invasion. Exactly these kinds of understandings had underpinned Kuwaiti foreign policy for decades yet this did not save it from a devastating invasion. The Palestinians in particular in the form of Yassir Arafat, despite being significant recipients of Kuwaiti largess, turned their backs on Kuwait and supported Hussein's invasion. This was a bitter blow for Kuwait and instructive for any other state who had faith in such reciprocity.

### International

In the 1970s President Nixon employed the twin pillar policy towards the Gulf. This meant that security of the region was delegated to the regional policemen Iran and Saudi Arabia. This allowed America to support these local client states but remain aloof until the Iranian Revolution emasculated this policy.

[439] Salman, "An Old Dialogue with the Emir of Qatar in the Context Of: Israel Being a Gatekeeper of Arab Affiliation with Washington." [Author's translation]
[440] Van Natta, "Last American Combat Troops Quit Saudi Arabia."

Subsequently, America needed a new strategy for the security of the region. Not only did it need to replace its now defunct policy, but with the 1979 invasion of Afghanistan the Soviet Union came to within a few hundred miles of the Gulf. In the fever of the Cold War, such a move caused agitation in Washington.[441] Also, the region itself was ever more critical to the world economy and the supply of oil; from 1985 onwards after a period where the risk had been shared more equally, the world once more became significantly more dependent on oil from the Gulf.[442]

Largely in reaction to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan President Carter inaugurated his eponymous doctrine which declared that the US would defend what it saw as its national interests in the Gulf region with force. This laid the ground work for an increasing foothold in the region as the 1980s developed. Already at least $3.2 billion worth of services had been sold to Saudi Arabia in the 1970s, but the Iraq-Iran war from 1980 onwards augmented fears in the Kingdom allowing America to increase its support. Eventually, America sold a further $50 billion worth of a (theoretical) Gulf-wide air defence system including the stationing of five AWACS planes in Saudi Arabia, which allowed for $14 billion worth of bases to be established and augmented throughout the Kingdom. Overall, around 10,000 civilian and several hundred military advisors were present in Saudi Arabia by the end of the decade.[443] As noted in US Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger's classified 1984-1988 'Defence Guidance Report,' this was all a part of a concerted plan to facilitate the introduction of US forces to the region if needed to defend Saudi Arabia and maintain regional stability.[444]

These arrangements were secret and there was little official commentary regarding the development of US-Gulf State relations. Though difficult to imagine after over two decades of cheek-by-jowl relations between America and the Arab Gulf States, in the 1980s few Gulf

[441] For an encapsulation of US interests and concerns in the Gulf particularly vis-à-vis the Soviet Union see Shahram Chubin, "Us Security Interests in the Persian Gulf in the 1980s," *Daedalus* 109, no. 4 (Fall 1980). And S A Yetiv, "How the Soviet Military Intervention in Afghanistan Improved the Us Strategic Position in the Persian Gulf," *Asian Affairs* 17, no. 2 (Summer 1990).
[442] Zalmay Khalilzad, "The United States and the Persian Gulf: Preventing Regional Hegemony," *Survival* 27, no. No.2 (1995): p.96.
[443] Joe Stork and Martha Wenger, "The Us in the Persian Gulf: From Rapid Deployment to Massive Deployment," *Middle East Report*, no. 168 (Jan-Feb 1991): p.23.
[444] Ibid., p.24.

States were disposed to cooperate with America.[445] As ever, perceived US favouritism towards Israel was a part of this animosity. Kuwait was considered by some to be an overt ally of the Soviet Union and even a "conduit" for the Soviet Union to showcase the benefits of friendship.[446] The invasion of Afghanistan, a Muslim country, cooled Kuwait's relations with the Soviet Union and it moved to a position of superpower non-alignment. Qatar was not disposed to either superpower and positively anti-American with the fall out of the Stinger acquisitions debacle in the late 1980s.

It took the Kuwaiti threat of seeking Soviet assistance to reflag its oil tankers during the Tanker War and the realisation that the Americans could do a far better job in providing protection before America finally engaged significantly. Indeed, by then America had been building up its forces in the Indian Ocean based in Diego Garcia and duly sent an armada of around fifty ships into the Gulf to reflag tankers, project its power, and make a statement of intent.[447]

The invasion of Kuwait further provided America with the reason it needed. Up to this point Saudi Arabia in particular wanted to keep their ever closening relations quiet and would only countenance an overt relationship if they encountered an unprecedented challenge. The Iraqi invasion presented such a challenge.

Qatar was, at this point, a passive actor. It took America's slowly increasing focus in the Gulf region and the Kuwait invasion-induced paradigm shift in the international relations of the Gulf for both America to become a palatable actor with whom to engage and for Qatar's leadership to feel the need to call for US help. Indeed, the Iraqi invasion not only asked new existential questions of Qatar but provided the answer at the same time.

[445] Gause III, *Oil Monarchies*, p.122.
[446] Yetiv, "How the Soviet Military Intervention in Afghanistan Improved the Us Strategic Position in the Persian Gulf," p.67.
[447] Stork and Wenger, "The Us in the Persian Gulf: From Rapid Deployment to Massive Deployment," p.25.

## International Mediation

As with any such all-encompassing term mediation can be defined widely, for example, "by the sought outcome (settlement, end to hostilities...); against other forms of dispute settling (arbitration, litigation...) or according to sought attributes of a mediator such as neutrality or impartiality."[448] Following an earlier study of Qatari mediation, a broader definition will be used with mediation being seen as "a form of conflict management in which a third party assists two or more contending parties to find a solution without resorting to force."[449]

The question then arises of how does the mediator mediate, for there is a continuum of involvement ranging from facilitation[450] through formulation to manipulation.[451] Typically, facilitation is more passive with the mediator relaying massages and arranging meetings as opposed to manipulation where progress is theoretically maintained through "the 'introduction of an element of power' and overall being far more active, dynamic and 'forceful' in the process."[452] In between these two poles the mediator is involved with suggesting ways to proceed, reframing the question, offering proposals but not in coercing or cajoling the disputants to move.

Qatar's forays into mediation throughout the Arab World, the Horn of Africa, and North Africa run the gamut of these definitions. In Lebanon Qatar was an overt 'manipulator' leading, cajoling, and pressuring the sides to get to an agreement using whatever carrots and sticks were available. In Darfur Qatar took a more reserved position. Primarily it acted as a facilitator for the warring parties, while upgrading its role when agreements were to be made to shrewd and overt manipulation. In Mauritania, from what evidence is available, it appears that Qatar acted as a trusted, impartial intermediary with the resources to secure the release of the prisoners.

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[448] Jacob Bercovitch, "Introduction," in *Studies in International Mediation*, ed. Jacob Bercovitch and Jeffrey Z. Rubin (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan 2002), p.6. quoted in Roberts, "Qatari Mediation," p.4.

[449] Marieke Kleiboer, "Understanding Success and Failure of International Mediation," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 40, no. 2 (1996): p.360 quoted in Roberts, "Qatari Mediation," p.4.

[450] Facilitation is also known as communication, process mediation, and offering 'good offices' in the literature. Similarly, manipulation is also known as content mediation.

[451] Bertram I Spector and Anna R Korula, "Facilitative Mediation in International Disputes: From Research to Practical Application," (Laxenburg: International Institution for Applied Systems Analysis, February 1992), p.4

[452] Roberts, "Qatari Mediation," p.4-5. Quoting Spector and Korula, "Facilitative Mediation in International Disputes: From Research to Practical Application," p.4

The theory of mediation offers possible explanations as to why actors engage in mediation.

> The motives for initiating individual mediation may include (a) a genuine desire to change the course of a long-standing or escalating conflict and promote peace, (b) a desire to gain access to major political leaders and open channels of communication, (c) a desire to spread one's ideas and enhance personal standing and professional status.
>
> Where mediators represent an official government...motives...may include: (a) a clear mandate to intervene in disputes [i.e. state is constitutionally mandated to do so] (b) a desire to do something about a conflict whose continuance may adversely affect their own political interests, (c) being approached directly by one or both parties... (d) the wish to preserve intact a structure of which they are a part... (e) viewing mediation as a way of extending and enhancing their own influence and gaining some value from the conflict.[453]

In the Qatari case where politics is so elite-dominated and where a group of no more than three of four people formulate and put into action new policies, one must consider the 'personal' motivations alongside 'state' motivations. Nevertheless, many of these other motivations apply to the Qatari examples, as will be discussed, but the importance of "enhancing their own influence" as the literature describes a typical motivation, is a reoccurring theme.

Qatar's various mediation attempts starting in the 1990s bare no comparison to previous policies in Qatar. While Khalifah Bin Hamad had countless meetings with key regional leaders, there is no evidence of any systematic attempts to make Qatar a state known for its mediation. Therefore, both quantitatively in terms of number mediations attempted and qualitatively in terms of the depth of interaction and the controversial nature of some of the mediations, it is clear that Qatar's mediation initiatives are a policy of the new era.

### Domestic

Historically, the Qatari Peninsula never suffered from centralised control. The vast majority of the Peninsula was inhospitable, unsettled, and uncontrolled. This situation did not change significantly until well into the twentieth century. Throughout the nineteenth century though control was sporadically extended to the more major settlements around the coast under various authorities in conjunction with various external powers, these settlements

[453] Bercovitch, "Introduction," p.9 as quoted in Roberts, "Qatari Mediation," p.8.

remained small in number, small in population, and relatively small in importance (aside from a brief moment in the sun for Zubarah in the late 18th century). As late as the 1940s Qatar's territorial integrity was still not under central control with Ibn Saud sending expeditions of geologists into the depths of Qatar clinically highlighting the lack of central Al Thani control.

This history whereby Qatar developed something of a reputation as a relatively ungoverned space meant that the Peninsula frequently attracted all manner of exiles and those fleeing authority. This did not make the Qatar Peninsula unique in the region but this trait reoccurs in Qatar's history until today. While it is unlikely that Hamad Bin Khalifah sought to actively build upon this historical trait by expanding from hosting exiles – a 'light' version of offering good offices – to fully fledged facilitation, formulation, and manipulation, he would not be the first leader who sought to hark back to a trait exemplified in the country's past to forge some kind of a link of historical continuity to the present even if that link was tenuous.

However, that Qatar traditionally hosted a variety of exiles proved to be useful both in mediations and in Qatar's Arab Spring policies. Hamad Bin Khalifah built up a close, personal relationship with Hamas' Secretary General Khaled Mishaal over many years of him residing sporadically in Doha. This personal link proved to be useful in inculcating Qatar into aspects of the politics in the Levant, culminating in the Emir's trip in 2012 as the first Head of State to visit Hamas-controlled Gaza.

Along with this tactical issue facilitating Qatar's mediation are equally prosaic concerns. Before Khalifah Bin Hamad took power, Qatar was little more than a village developing quickly with leaders at the helm who spent as much time in Geneva as in Doha. There was, therefore, no capacity and no elite desire to involve Qatar in any kind of international mediation. Though Khalifah Bin Hamad engaged in a wider gamut of foreign policies than his predecessors, he was mostly preoccupied with developing the Qatari state to solidify and extend his support. Also his conservative disposition militated against any kind of risky international manoeuvres. In short, that he did not engage in any significant wider mediatory forays is not surprising and in keeping with his character and ruling temperament.

The same cannot be said for his son Hamad Bin Khalifah for foreign mediation can be seen as an archetypal 'Hamadian' policy. It projected power abroad giving Qatar greater sway internationally; it did this in an inoffensive capacity as a 'neutral' arbiter of conflicts; it slowly built up Qatar's reputation as a state willing to bear costs to facilitate peace internationally, highlighting Qatar's burgeoning international statesmanship; and it – along with the finance that typically came with Qatari mediation – increased Qatar's international popularity.[454]

When Hamad Bin Khalifah took over in 1995, like his father before him he immediately began to vigorously seek to popularise himself and his rule. His father started by sharing the Qatari wealth to a far greater degree as noted in Chapter 3. Hamad Bin Khalifah used rentier policies of distributing wealth for support; he also took steps towards the dispersal of power, the enfranchisement of women, and significant opening up of debate with the removal of censorship. These policies pointed the direction in which he sought to take the country; on a clearly more liberal tack. In this context, fostering a reputation for Qatar as a state that seeks to bring peace where possible around the wider region has progressive echoes of his domestic direction of travel. Indeed, Hamad Bin Khalifah sought to indelibly inscribe these progressive notions towards foreign policy into Qatar's constitution. Article seven of the constitution drawn up under Hamad and voted into effect by popular vote in 2003, notes that

> The foreign policy of the State is based on the principle of strengthening international peace and security by means of encouraging peaceful resolution of international disputes; and shall support the right of peoples to self-determination; and shall not interfere in the domestic affairs of states; and shall cooperate with peace-loving nations.[455]

Just as policies notionally directed domestically can have impact abroad, so too foreign policies can be designed to have resonance domestically; as former Speaker of the United States House of Representatives Thomas O'Neill noted, 'all politics is local.' From Qatar's role supporting the Palestinian cause via Hamas to Qatar's wide-ranging mediation, the state was undertaking policies that usually resonated well domestically.

[454] The contrast between the set of mediations discussed here and the non-neutral Arab Spring forays in Libya and Syria is discussed below.
[455] "The Constitution," *Qatar Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

Finally, a prosaic but crucial point is that Qatar began to accrue more money than it could spend, particularly during the 2000s. With such a situation comes not only a search for ways to spend the excess but a lower threshold for deciding whether to engage in a particular activity or not. In this context mediation became a luxury item that Qatar could easily afford.

Qatar's financial strength facilitated mediation in the same way that the US-led security guarantees facilitated it by releasing Qatar from the mundane concerns of securing the realm. Similarly it gave Qatar trust that if the mediation were to go badly wrong – not an insignificant concern when negotiating with Gaddafi's Libya or potentially Iranian-backed Houthis – Qatar's security was still secure with US backing.

Given the nature of Qatar and the personal way that decisions made, there are important links between individuals and policies. In the case of the Qatari decision to mediate in Lebanon (and in Sudan and Yemen), Gulbrandsen seeks to draw links between Qatari business interests and Qatar's mediatory intervention.[456] He rightly notes that in 2007 when the crisis was at its worst, Qatar was the fourth largest investor in Lebanon.[457] He also notes that Qataris are known to have personal property and business interests in the country, while Lebanon's proximity to Syria where Qatar also had significant investments further suggests that 'business diplomacy' driven by a desire to secure Qatar's investments may have been a motivating factor.

It is likely that the investment that the Qatari elite had tied up in Lebanon and Syria affected the decision but splitting the vexatious issues of correlation and causality in this case is difficult. It is certainly not the case that the money was the only factor; if Qatar mediated or otherwise intervened everywhere it had investments its foreign policy would be even more active than it already is. Gulbrandsen puts together more sporadically compelling statistics regarding the depth of Qatari investment in Yemen and in Sudan, yet still the question of correlation and causality is problematic.[458]

[456] Anders Gulbrandsen, "Bridging the Gulf: Qatari Business Diplomacy and Conflict Mediation" (Georgetown University, 2010).
[457] Ibid., P.51.
[458] Ibid., pp.40-75.

In the Sudanese case one potential reason for Qatar's mediation stems from issues of food security. Qatar is one of the most food insecure nations on earth importing at least 90 per cent of its food from abroad. With a fast-growing population and regional competition to secure farm land abroad, Qatar established Hassad Foods to act as the agribusiness component of its sovereign wealth fund. Given that Sudan was once known as the 'bread basket' of Africa and Qatar's desire to secure long-term sources of food stuffs, it is difficult to disassociate Qatar's mediation involvement from these issues. Engaging in mediation is a good way to establish and build up good will, good contacts, and a potentially good track record of business. Indeed, with the mediation costing Qatar up to $2 billion, Qatar showed deep commitment to the issue. Even when Sudanese President Bashir was being pilloried in the Western press and indicted as a war criminal, still Qatar stuck by him.[459]

As yet there is insufficient evidence to link Qatar's mediation in Sudan to subsequent land or food purchases. Though there have been not insignificant land purchases, Qatar has bought land across the world and one cannot establish a causative link.[460]

## Regional

In the 1970s Kuwait invented the role of a small, Gulf country, seeking to forge a range of international relations, while using its financial largesse to bolster causes deemed worthy to engender a positive, non-aligned reputation.[461] Kuwait's oil money has long been used for foreign and even defence policy to the extent where "virtually every time a danger presented itself, Kuwait responded with foreign aid."[462]

While Kuwait was gallivanting around the region using its financial largesse to support friendly causes, Qatar was decades behind in terms of development. From the eighteenth century onwards Kuwait - the 'Marseilles of the Gulf' as Goldberg memorably describes it[463] - was more established and advanced while Qatar was still a collection of small, mostly poor villages. There was, therefore, little opportunity for Qatar to emulate such a foreign policy.

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[459] Andrew England, "Bashir Hailed in Qatar Despite Darfur Charges," *The Financial Times* 30 March 2009.
[460] Martina Fuchs, "Qatar's Next Big Purchase: A Farming Sector," *Reuters*(06 January 2012)
[461] See Ulrichsen, "The Gulf States and South-South Cooperation, 1961-1990: Contradictions and Commonalities."
[462] Crystal quoted in David B Roberts, "Kuwait," in *Power and Politics in the Persian Gulf Monarchies*, ed. Christopher Davidson (London: Hurst & Co., 2011), p.105.
[463] Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia : The Formative Years, 1902-1918*, p.31.

As oil began to flow more vigorously in the 1970s and the price rose steeply with the regional crises, as noted in Chapter 3**,** Khalifah Bin Hamad engaged in sporadic policies to burnish Qatar's international image notably by following the Kuwaiti example and offering international aid. Yet there was no paradigm shift in Qatar's foreign policies here; more of a peripatetic desire to dabble internationally when the international climate was favourable.

Yet it was this quietest regional history that subsequently helped Qatar when it sought to become a mediator. By virtue of being such a restrained international actor, Qatar could credibly note that it scarcely had any axe to grind on the international scene. Unlike Saudi Arabia, which by virtue of its size and geopolitical self-image had long had defined policies and allies around the region, Qatar was a relatively blank slate.

In Lebanon in 2008, Saudi Arabia was one of the many would-be mediators that failed. A key part of the reason for their failure is that their history in the region demonstrated that Saudi Arabia could not possibly be seen as impartial. In particular, Hezbollah, the Shia group with a significant say in the negotiations, would never accept the Kingdom in a meaningful mediatory role. By contrast Qatar had no history of animosity towards Hezbollah and had been seeking to diversify its international contacts and open lines of discussion and support with all parties. Qatar was thus in the unique position of being able to call Tel Aviv and Tehran in the morning and the hills of Lebanon and Washington in the afternoon. Qatar's unique ability to be the interlocutor in negotiations which needed the acquiescence and support of diverse actors like Israel, Iran, and America gave Qatar a comparative advantage, which it used to good effect. In this sense, Qatar sought to fill a gap that was missing in regional politics.

Similarly, it is possible to see Qatar's mediatory forays as a way of calming regional tensions, particularly in relation to Iran.[464] Arab-Persian animosity dates back to perennial questions of identity, culture, and religion with some aspects stemming back thousands of years. The modern twist stemming from the 1979 Iranian Revolution sharpened the differences and concerns between the conservative Sunni monarchies and the proselytizing republican Shia revolutionaries.

[464] I must thank Gerd Nonneman for framing this issue in this particular fashion at the Exeter Gulf Conference in 2010.

The reaction of the Gulf States to Iran and its international politics differs. Saudi Arabia typically leads a staunch block seeking to contain and constrain Iran wherever possible. Accommodation and negotiation, though occasionally undertaken, is the exception that tests the rule. Abu Dhabi has in recent years, notably since 2007, followed this Saudi path. Kuwait occasionally falls into place though its effervescent and near-uncontrollable Parliament instilled Kuwait's foreign policies as the 2000s progressed with ever more balance. Bahrain follows Riyadh's path and has done so with extra gusto since the Arab Spring arrived in Manama in February 2011. Oman and Qatar have largely eschewed the Saudi line for decades. Both believe that it is in their best interests to attempt to deal with Iran constructively. This is not to say that Iranian bilateral relations are necessarily warm, but that Oman and Qatar usually display a different conclusion to the 'Iranian equation' compared with Saudi Arabia. Indeed, several instances of Qatari mediation may be seen in this context; of Qatar seeking innovative and non-confrontational ways of addressing growing Iranian influence.

While Qatar has a positive relationship with Hezbollah, which has allegedly included supporting the organization financially and certainly defending it politically, this does not mean that it wants to see Iran's proxy take untrammelled power in Lebanon.[465] Clearly Hezbollah is a power to be reckoned with in Lebanon. Qatar's relationship with Hezbollah does not stem from ideological conviction but from a sober reflection on the realities of power in the Levant: it would do Qatar no good (just as it does Saudi Arabia no good) to simply ignore them.

Aware of the realities of power in the country as demonstrably shown by Hezbollah in the run up to the Qatari mediation, Qatar sought to salvage the situation by enshrining the *de facto* Hezbollah power in a more *de jure* fashion. Qatar, it can be argued, undertook a damage limitation exercise preventing Hezbollah fermenting further civic strife and gaining a position where the Iranian-backed group could push for even more gains against a weak and divided Lebanese state and Army.

[465] Rabi, "Qatar's Relations with Israel: Chellenging Arab and Gulf Norms," p.454.

In the Yemeni example the Iranian link is tenuous. The Houthis are Zaydi Muslims, which is closer to Shia Islam than Sunni, but still not analogous despite attempts to portray Iran as a natural, religiously-aligned supporter of their cause. Nevertheless, there have been several documented visits by Houthi leaders to Iran as well as sporadic reports of weapons shipments and other support.[466] In this context it is possible to suggest that Qatar's desire to seek some kind of equitable solution in Yemen was a part of a wider desire to shore up the troubled country to prevent any growth of Iranian influence.

Lastly, in terms of the wider Sudanese-Horn region, Iran has been a weapons supplier to Sudan historically and particularly since the mid-2000s the Islamic Republic has been explicitly seeking to augment relations.[467] More recently the Iranian angle in Sudan has come to light after strikes on weapon-smuggling convoys bound for Gaza and on a munitions factory in Khartoum, Sudan's capital.[468] Reports of Iran developing a military base in Eritrea appear to be baseless, but it has certainly increased significantly its profile with Iran with a raft of agreements.[469] More generally, the Economist notes that Iran has been active in pushing senior diplomatic visits to Africa, at least in part to seek support against an increasingly hostile international community.[470] To some degree, this is working with Iran receiving notable diplomatic support regarding its nuclear issues, while Iran has also been accused of supplying weapons throughout the region often with the aim of supplying anti-Israeli groups.[471]

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[466] For example, "Yemen's Houthis Hold Secret Meet with Iran," *Al Arabiyya* (13th December 2009)
David Schenker, "Who's Behind the Houthis?," *The Weekly Standard* vol.15, , no. no. 22 (22nd February 2010).
"Houthis Recieve Arms from Iran Via Eritrea," *Yemen Post* (10th April 2010)
Shaun Overton, "Understanding the Second Houthi Rebellion in Yemen," in *Terrorism Monitor* (The Jamestown Foundation, 17th June 2005).
J. E. Peterson, "The Al-Huthi Conflict in Yemen," *Arabian Peninsula Background Note* No. APBN-006(August 2008).

[467] Amir Taheri, "Sudan: An Expanding Civil War with an Iran Connection," *New York Times*(9th April 1997)

[468] Dan Willians, "Sudan: A Front for Israel's Proxy War on Sinai Jihadis?," *Reuters*(25 October 2012)

[469] Though the Gulf News debunking report is not particularly convincing, neither was to original report. And given America's presence in Djibouti and Ethiopia, it seems highly unlikely that a serious Iranian presence in Eritrea would remain to this day un verified and non-public. Abdul Nabi Shaheen, "Eritrea: In Pursuit of the Truth," *GulfNews.com* (21 April 2012)

[470] "A Search for Allies in a Hostile World," *The Economist* (4 February 2010).

[471] "Iran and Hamas Back Sudan's Bashir," *Al Jazeera*(7th March 2009)
Colum Lynch, "U.N. Report Cites Outside Military Ais to Somalia's Islamic Forces," *The Washington Post* 15th November 2006.

Just as with mediation in Yemen, there is logic to the notion that Qatar may want to attempt to assert itself in the Horn-Sudanese region. Involving itself in the machinations of the Darfur questions with all the personal contacts that that will necessarily create is potentially a sensible approach to take to gain a primary understanding of the regions' goings on. Similarly, by investing in Sudan via the mediation (in terms of time, money, and effort) Qatar is shoring up its relations across the country, which may prove useful as a foil against Iranian encroachment.

## International

For most of the reign of Khalifah Bin Hamad (1972-1995) the Cold War prevailed. Its dynamics set the overarching tone of international relations instilling a set of constraints on the international system that were implicitly and explicitly acted upon. The place of states, their role in the system, the limits of their actions, and the expectations upon them were set. With the end of the Cold War came a transformation of these fundamental issues. Stern and Druckman offer a brief summary of some of the effects of this paradigm shift.

> The end of an era of bipolarity, a new wave of democratization, increasing globalization of information and economic power, more frequent efforts at international coordination of security policy, a rash of sometimes-violent expressions of claims to rights based on cultural identity, and a redefinition of sovereignty that imposes on states new responsibilities to their citizens and the world community.[472]

Simultaneously, in the words of former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) director James Woolsey, the end of the Cold War meant that conflicts that had been pent up were released and the dragon of the Soviet Union had been slain to be replaced by a "jungle of snakes."[473] This change in the international system and the change in type and number of conflicts "opened the door for small state facilitation in conflict resolution."[474]

This theoretical approach positing that the international system was not conducive to small state mediation tallies with a perusal of the basic history of the region. Under the duress of cold war bipolarity where assisting or even maintaining positive relations with a particular

[472] Paul C. Stern and Daniel Druckman, *International Conflict Resolution after the Cold War* (Washington, D.C. ; [United Kingdom]: National Academy Press, 2000), p.1.
[473] Quoted in Marcus Foster, "Small States in Peacemaking Roles," *Jackson School Journal of International Studies* 1, no. 2 (Spring 2011): p.24.
[474] Ibid.

state was potentially enough to pin one's colours to the wall with all the ramifications of being readily identified with one particular camp, it is understandable that a small relatively defenceless state like Qatar would not pursues such an action.

Yet with more conflicts finally escaping their Cold War-based repression, there emerged something of a target rich environment for actors looking to engage in mediation. Empirically, Yilmaz notes that from 1948-1978 thirteen peacekeeping forces were established but this number was not augmented from 1978 to 1988. However, from near the end of the Cold War in May 1988 to October 1993 twenty new missions were created. By December 2008, he continues, a total of sixty-three had been created.[475] Such statistics highlight the explosion of smaller conflicts that the end of the Cold War era heralded and the ability of the international community to react and do something about them.

After the end of the Cold War, the next paradigm altering event for the Middle East was the attacks on America on 11 September 2001. The post-9/11 America saw the Arab world from a basic, Manichean perspective; as President George W Bush put it, "you're either with us or against us."[476]

Qatar was one of the states that was seen – though not without a couple of crises – as an Arab State 'on America's side.' Support in the War on Terror not least through increased basing agreements meant that Qatar had more latitude to act than other states as the decade progressed. Certainly, there were sometimes angry statements emanating from the American administration such as former Presidential candidate John Kerry's admonishment that "Qatar cannot continue to be an American ally on Monday that sends money to Hamas on Tuesday."[477] Yet, over time, America's Government came to realise that Qatar, though not perfect, was nevertheless a useful ally. Indeed, Qatar fostered a niche role for itself as an interlocutor between America and some of the more problematic Arab regimes and Muslim groups with whom Qatar regularly engaged, often in the pursuit of its mediatory activities.

[475] Muzaffer Ercan Yilmaz, ""The New World Order": An Outline of the Post-Cole War Era," *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations* 7, no. 4 (Winter 2008): p.46.
[476] "You Are Either with Us or against Us," *CNN*(6 November 2011)
[477] Sophie Evans, "Doha's Expanding Diplomatic Role," *MEED Middle East Economic Digest* 53, no. 24 (2009).

The case of the opening of a Taliban office in Qatar, first mooted in late 2011, is an interesting example of Qatar seeking to position itself as a key interlocutor.[478] In the light of the US and coalition draw-down of troops in Afghanistan and given the difficulties of finding suitable representatives from the Taliban with whom to negotiate, an opening appeared for an intermediary to bring the two sides together. Qatar, with Germany's assistance, put the proposal forward, which was eventually accepted. Despites several apparent 'cancellations' of the office, it has been operating in Qatar since late 2012 and a fully-fledged office is expected to open in 2013.[479]

Qatar lives to provide just such a role. America's exit from Afghanistan is of critical importance to the US Administration. Much blood and treasure has been expended in Afghanistan in the past decade and Americans do not want to see this count for naught. These negotiations, as unpalatable as some may find them, are an important part of ensuring a more stable Afghanistan going forward. Qatar, by facilitating this potentially key avenue for talks on such a critically important topic, is reminding America and the wider international community of the almost uniquely important role that Qatar can play in the international community.

[478] Matthew Rosenberg, "Taliban Opening Qatar Office, and Maybe Door to Talks," *New York Times* 3 January 2012.
[479] Personal Interview: Qatar-Based Journalist, 05 March 2013.

## International Relations and Investments

In 1989 Qatar began to discuss with Iran the possibility of piping water from the lake behind the Shahid Abbaspour Dam on the River Karun, Iran's largest river, under the Gulf to Qatar.[480] This overture from Qatar came as key events such as the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, the rise of Ayatollah Khamenei, and President Rafsanjani were turning "the doctrines and the practices of Iranian foreign policy on their heads."[481] Qatar, perennially nimble in its foreign policy, sought to take advantage of this changing situation at a time when Qatar and Iran were going to have to delineate and develop their giant gas field.

Soon after the Kuwaiti invasion Iranian Defence Minister Ali Akbar Torkan visited Doha[482] and the Heir Apparent Hamad Bin Khalifah welcomed the 1991 mini-rapprochement and resumption of diplomatic relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia believing that Iran must "have a say in any security architecture devised for the region in the post crisis era."[483] Hamad Bin Khalifah then visited Iran in November 1991 being the highest ranking GCC visitor to Iran post-invasion and signed a raft of agreements and understandings with Iranian counterparts. In 1992 First Vice President Hasan Habibi headed a delegation visit to Qatar "regarded by the Iranians as "watershed" events in the relations of the two countries"[484] and the Qatari Minister of the Interior then visited Tehran in reply to sign further agreements, while Qatar's new dynamic foreign Minister, Hamad Bin Jassem Al Thani, spent two weeks of 1993 in Iran.[485]

One Egyptian report from Misr Al Fatah after the 1992 Qatar-Saudi border skirmish went as far as to claim that Qatar signed in retaliation a $13 billion agreement for Iran to construct "ports, jetties, and roads in Qatar" even noting that "the Qatari leadership requested Iranian protection against Saudi threats."[486] Similarly, in 1995 after an alleged coup attempt, reports emerged suggesting that Iran pledged to send 30,000 troops to defend Hamad Bin

[480] Taremi, "The Role of Water Exports in Iranian Foreign Policy Towards the GCC," p.323.
[481] Ramazani, "Iran's Foreign Policy: Both North and South," p.393.
[482] Ibid., p.401.
[483] Rabi, "Qatar," p.607.
[484] Ramazani, "Iran's Foreign Policy: Both North and South," p.401.
[485] Wogan, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1993."
[486] *Iranian Proection Asked against Saudi 'Threats'*, Misr Al Fatah (Cairo: FBIS-NES-92-201 on 1992-10-16, 12 October 1992).

Khalifah in Qatar.[487] In reality, these reports (and particularly the former) are an exaggeration if not outright speculation, but they nevertheless speak to not only the feverish climate at the time but the potential as seen by some for the Qatari-Iranian relationship. Indeed, Hamad Bin Khalifah himself hints that he believed that such a rapprochement with Iran could be useful for forcing the Americans to sit at the negotiating table with Qatar to establish a security framework; the implicit threat being if America cannot guarantee Qatar, maybe Iran could.[488]

Continuing Qatari attempts to boost relations with Iran include using its diplomatic role when on the UN Security Council in 2006 to vote against Resolution 1696 censuring Iran and demanding that it cease nuclear enrichment. Though the resolution easily passed, Qatar sent a strong message to Iran of its support. Similarly, the next year Qatar abstained on UN resolution 1757 seeking a tribunal to investigate the assassination of Rafik Hariri in Lebanon, a move that also played well in Tehran (and Damascus, its key ally).

In 2007 Qatar invited Iran to the GCC's annual meeting, the first time that an Iranian leader had been so invited, much to the chagrin of other GCC attendees. 2008 saw Qatar's key intervention in Lebanon (as noted above), which some see as Qatar aiding Hezbollah and unverified though plausible reports suggest that Qatar was sending up to $100m per year to Hezbollah.[489] 2009 was a year of numerous bilateral visits including the Emir and the Chief of Staff of the Qatari Armed Forces visiting Iran culminating in agreements on their joint border and related security arrangements and the signing of an unspecified military cooperation agreement the next year.[490]

Such relatively strong and numerous actions supporting Iran may be interpreted as Qatar seeking some kind of balance for hosting of US forces during the Iraq War with Qatar wanting to prove that it is not beholden to America at all. Indeed, what better way could there be of proving its independence than engaging consistently with America's key regional enemy? There are also many smaller examples of Qatar pursuing a balance. For example,

[487] Pipes, "Interview with Hamad Bin Jassim Bin Jabr Al Thani."
[488] Salman, "An Old Dialogue with the Emir of Qatar in the Context Of: Israel Being a Gatekeeper of Arab Affiliation with Washington."
[489] "Iran: A Need for Budget Cuts," *Stratfor Global Intelligence*(13 April 2009)
[490] Christopher M Blanchard, "Qatar: Background and U.S. Relations," in *CRS Report for Congress* (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 05 May 2010), p.1.

when in 2010 US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton delivered a harsh, at times anti-Iranian speech at the Doha Forum, Qatar gave permission for several Iranian warships to be docked in Doha at the same time, as Press TV proudly reported.[491] Similarly, Qatar refused the Bush Administration's request to close down Iranian banks working in Doha and while not allowing any new ones to open, the Qatari Government announced that it would allow "in classic Qatari fashion" the existing Iranian bank in Qatar to open another branch on the day of former Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson's visit to Qatar in mid-2008.[492] Former American Ambassador James LeBaron went on to explain that this behaviour "does not satisfy either the U.S. or Iran, but it exemplifies how the Al Thani leadership tries to maintain balance between competing interests."[493] Indeed, as much as such examples of relations hint at serious Qatari-Iranian competition, it is questionable how meaningful the relationship actually is or if it is more of a public relations exercise as Hamad Bin Jassem noted about his Iranian counterparts, "they [Iran] lie to us; we lie to them."[494]

Around this time Qatar was boosting its relations with Israel too. Stemming from the November 1991 Madrid Peace Conference, Qatar signalled its willingness to end its boycott of Israel. Slowly thereafter Qatar increased levels of recognition of Israel until it was "the first GCC State to offer *de facto* recognition of Israel by launching trade relations."[495] The signing of the 1993 Oslo Peace Principles further facilitated relations and several visits ensued. This progressed to Hamad Bin Khalifah attending the 'Oslo 2' signing ceremony, the Qatari Minister of Information attending Prime Minister Rabin's funeral, and his successor, Shimon Peres, visiting Qatar in April 1996, which laid the ground-work for the official opening of the Israeli trade office in Doha on 24 May 1996.[496]

The trade office focused on telecoms, aviation, and Israel also sent a large trade delegation to the military and police trade fare Milipol in November 1996.[497] While relations were inevitably somewhat strained and unusual (even if it transpires that Toys 'R Us in Doha sold

[491] Despite this event being reported in Press TV, it did actually happen.
"Iranian Warship, Destoryer Dock at Qatari Port," *Press TV*(15 February 2010)
[492] LeBaron, "Subject: Scenesetter for Senator Kerry's Visit to Qatar."
[493] Ibid.
[494] "Us Embasy Cables: Qatari Prime Minister: 'Iranians Lie to Us'".
[495] Rabi, "Qatar's Relations with Israel: Chellenging Arab and Gulf Norms," p.448.
[496] Personal Interview: Israeli Diplomat, 11 August 2010.
[497] Ibid.

F-16 toy airplanes with Israeli markings), both sides were optimistic and set about slowly building ties.[498] Potentially the most important deal focused on LNG with Enron acting as the key interlocutor. Discussions began in 1993 and eventually failed in 1998.

The office in Doha struggled in the face of Arab criticism. Qatar managed to resist Arab pressure to close the office until November 2000 when Qatar was scheduled to host the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) summit after which, Qatar was to take over its presidency. Violence in the Palestinian Territories exacerbated by Israel Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's visit to the Al Aqsa mosque - a provocative action - exacerbated relations and Saudi Arabia and Iran threatened to boycott the event unless the Israeli office was closed. Qatar announced the closure of the office on 09 November 2000.[499] However, according to leaked US Diplomatic Cables, the office "never effectively closed. In fact, Israeli personnel remained in Qatar, keeping a low profile, until normal operations of the office resumed."[500]

Without an official announcement the office restarted and was led by Ambassador Roi Rosenblit from 2006 to 2009. This period saw sporadic elite interaction such as Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni speaking at the Doha Forum on Democracy, Development and Free Trade on 14 April 2008.[501] However, in reaction to Israel's December 2008 Operation Cast Lead, Qatar officially closed the office and broke off diplomatic relations. Subsequent overtures from Qatar to reopen the office in 2010 and 2011 were also rejected by Israel and stymied by Egypt.[502] Finally, leaks from the Israeli Foreign Ministry in 2011 indicated a firming of Israel's stance against Qatar and a complete closure of the office facility.

The relationships with Israel and Iran are starkly different from the past when such relations were unthinkable under Saudi Arabia's auspices. Yet there was also a deepening of relations with other actors in the region that while not as unique still constitute a significant change from the past's less concerted attempts at augmenting diverse relations.

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[498] Ibid.

[499] "Israel to Sever Ties with Qatar," *The Daily Star*(26 August 2011)

[500] "Qatar Could Sever Ties with Israel If Part of Joint Arab Stance," in *Cablegate* (Doha, Qatar: Wikileaks, 12 January 2009).

[501] "Address by Fm Livni to the 8th Doha Forum on Democracy, Develpment, and Free Trade," *Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs*(14 April 2008)

[502] "Israel Rejects Qatar Diplomatic Overtures: Report," *AFP*(18 May 2010)
Egypt played a blocking role in not allowing Qatar's goods into Gaza, which contributed to stymying the reopening of the office.

In 1995 Qatar announced its intention to open an office in Gaza mirroring its increasing interest in the region and to act as a centre from which to monitor the increasing amount of money it was spending.[503] While a small office may have subsequently opened, there is little evidence of such a Qatari facility being operational. Building on a long-term relationship with Hamas' Secretary General Khaled Mishaal, in 2012 the Emir of Qatar became the first leader to visit Hamas-controlled Gaza since its 2006 election win. Again, to facilitate the dispersal of Qatari aid, the Emir announced the opening of an office in Gaza.[504]

Aside from Hamas and long-term contacts with the Palestinian Authority, Qatar has an ambiguous relationship with Hezbollah. The specifics of this relationship are difficult to dissect. Qatar has supported and protected the group diplomatically and politically and there are suggestions that Qatar has supported them financially too.[505] This kind of a supportive relationship with a Shia group like Hezbollah is unusual in Qatar's history and is another feature of Qatar's policies under the new elite, which maintains that it needs to speak to all sides and deal with the realities of whomever has power.

Just as Qatar's diplomatic relations expanded under the new Qatari elite, so too did its financial dealings as Qatar's gas ventures came online and the state had more money than it could spend. Unlike Kuwait which established the company that would become its SWF in 1953, Qatar's SWF the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) was founded in 2005. Previously investment was undertaken on a smaller scale by a team under the auspices of the Ministry of Finance (MOF) and leaked US Government cables note that the QIA was still run until late 2007 from the MOF.[506] Crown Prince Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani is the Chairman of QIA but Hamad Bin Jassem is the Vice-Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the major driving force in the operation of the fund.

Aside from the QIA there are various other Qatar-based funds. The Crown Princes' Qatar Sports Investment (QSI) fund invests heavily throughout the sports industry and was

[503] "Qatar to Open Office in Gaza," *Jerusalem Post* 31 July 1995.
It is possible that there was some Qatari proxy presence on Gaza as a locally based instrument to distribute Qatar's aid money, but there is no evidence of any significant Qatari-flagged and staffed office that the notion of 'Qatar to open office in Gaza' puts across.
[504] Nicolas Pelham, "Gaza: A Way Out?," *The New York Review of Books (Blog)*(26 October 2012)
[505] "Iran: A Need for Budget Cuts".
[506] "Qatar Investment Authoirty, Part One: History and Structure," in *Cablegate* (Wikileaks, 23 July 2008).

responsible for buying the French football team Paris St Germain in 2011 (not QIA as it often noted). There are large family ran funds that invest across sectors but mostly focus on banking, sport, and luxury goods, while on occasion it is not at all clear what entity is investing as with the much misunderstood attempt to invest in the Muslim-dominated suburbs around Paris in 2012.[507] Despite these other sources of funds, the QIA is the standard-bearer and by far the largest source of investments from Qatar.

The QIA is split into different companies that control different areas. Qatar Diar is a real-estate development company, Qatar Holding focuses on strategic private and public equity or direct investments, and Hassad Foods focuses on agribusiness investments. The stated goal of the QIA is to develop investments to secure Qatar's long-term financial future through economic diversification.

The QIA has focused on acquiring (often large) stakes in some of the world's most prominent companies including Agricultural Bank of China, Barclays Bank, Cegelec, Credit Suisse, Harrods, Heathrow Airport Holdings, Hochtief, Iberdrola, Lagardère Group, London Stock Exchange, Miramax Films, Porsche and Volkswagen, Sainsbury's, Santander Brazil, Shell, Siemens, Tiffany, Vinci, Xstrata, and various high-end property deals with a particular focus on London and Paris.

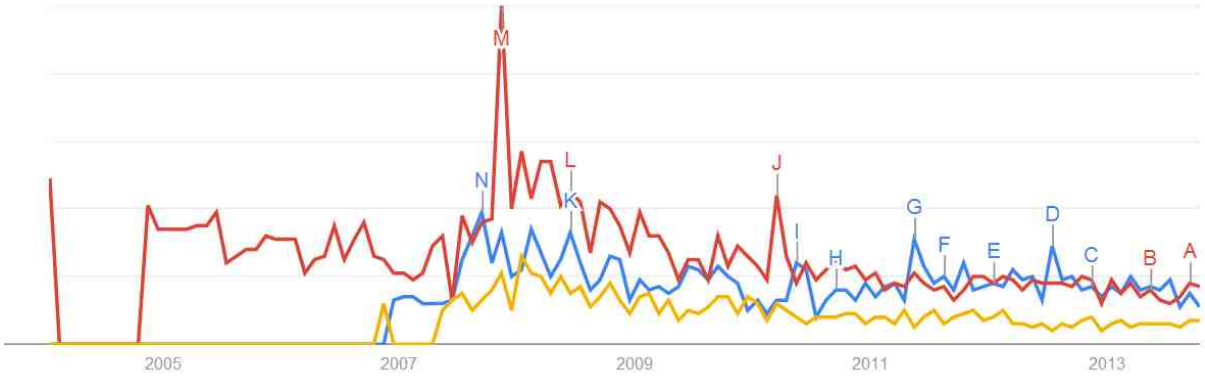
It is interesting to note the prominence of the QIA as compared to its size. Estimates vary and accurate conclusions are difficult to arrive at due to the secrecy of most SWFs, but according to a range of statistics, the QIA is by no means the largest SWF in the world. The US Government Accountability Office lists ten SWFs with larger funds, as does a report written at the Wharton School, while an in-depth article in the OECD Journal *Financial Market Trends* places QIA ninth in the world in terms of size.[508] Even accounting for growth

[507] David B Roberts, "Qatar's Flowering Relationship with Paris," *The Financial Times*(01 November 2012)

[508] Christopher Blanchard, "Qatar: Background and U.S. Relations," (Congressional Research Service, 6 June 2012), p.5.
Gokhan Afyonoglu et al., "The Brave New World of Sovereign Wealth Funds," (Wharton Leadership Center, University of Pennsylvania, 2010), p.6.
"Sovereign Wealth Funds," (Washington DC: United States Government Accountability Office, September 2008), p.41.
Adrian Blundell-Wignall, Yu-Wei Hu, and Juan Yermo, "Sovereign Wealth and Pension Fund Issues," *Financial Market Trends* (2008): p.121.

since these reports were produced, the QIA is still not close to entering the top five largest SWF funds in the world. Yet it retains an unusual prominence as a Google Trend search neatly highlights. In essence, Google Trends displays the frequency that a given phrase was entered into the Google search engine. In this case, 'Qatar Investment Authority,' 'Abu Dhabi Investment Authority,' and 'Kuwait Investment Authority,' were the key terms and the time frame was from 2004 to 2013. Even though the Abu Dhabi and Kuwaiti SWFs are significantly larger and more established (by decades in the Kuwaiti example), as the QIA's blue line shows in the graph below, QIA holds its own very well despite being smaller and newer.[509]

***Figure 1: Google Trend Search for QIA and Other Notable SWFs***




*"Abu Dhabi Investment Fund" Red Line; "Qatar Investment Authority" Blue Line; "Kuwait Investment Authority" Yellow Line*

This has not happened by accident as this kind of business prominence is a part of what Qatar seeks.[510] It has achieved this in part by having unusually close relations with the financial press as well as focusing on taking often large stakes in high-profile companies.[511]

## Domestic

In the Qatari context where such a small number of people are of such importance in designing the strategic direction and tactical policies, a single individual can have the most

[509] The methodology of the Google Trend Search has not been analysed in detail and so this one example cannot be taken as being statistically significant, but such relative prominence for QIA nevertheless backs up expert commentary and initial impressions.
[510] Personal Correspondance: Patrick Flaherty, Sovereign Wealth Fund Researcher, 15 March 2013.
[511] Ibid.

profound effects. For Qatar emerging in the 1980s and 1990s there was a small group of people who shared a broad vision for how Qatar should change to meet emerging challenges. This group is traditionally understood as containing the Hamad Bin Khalifah, Sheikha Moza Bint Nasser Al Misnad, and the Foreign and Prime Minister Hamad Bin Jassem at the very top with Abdullah Bin Hamad Al Attiyah the former long-term Industry and Energy Minister and key advisors like Dr Ibrahim Al Ibrahim playing important supporting roles.

Divining the intra-group dynamics and who ought to be considered as members of the group is not straight-forward without access to the country's leadership for full and frank interviews and there are only limited in-depth interviews in the media and no published memoirs or similar sources. In lieu of such evidence, it is necessary to rely upon sensible deductions based on available evidence to understand the core motives for designing policies such as Qatar's desire to broaden its international relations.

Firstly, the relative youth of this new cohort is striking. Hamad Bin Khalifah was 43 when he took power in 1995 while most regional leaders were a full generation older: his peer was 72 in Saudi Arabia, 76 in the UAE, 69 in Kuwait, 62 in Bahrain, and 54 in Oman. Hamad Bin Jassem was in his late 30s when the coup occurred as was Sheikha Moza Bint Nasser, Hamad Bin Khalifah's most prominent wife.[512]

Born in the early 1950s, Hamad grew up in a world of revolutionary, Nasserist rhetoric. State borders were seemingly weakened by these pan-national movements carried by pan-national broadcasts like *Sawt Al Arab*, the central medium of information propagation of its era.[513] One must refrain from engaging in after-the-fact rationalisations, but it is striking how similar one of the Emir's early ideas (Al Jazeera) was to *Sawt Al Arab*. Both were revolutionary uses of newly available technology in the Middle East and both were uniquely powerful for years and seen as the key medium of imbibing information by huge numbers of

[512] These ages and birthdays are as accurate as possible, but the reported age of leaders throughout the Gulf often varies according to different sources.
[513] Laura M James, "Whose Voice? Nasser, the Arabs, and 'Sawt Al-Arab'," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies* 16(2006).

Arabs around the region.[514] It is not possible to work out what goes on in the mind of a leader or what the most important factors were that shaped his thoughts, yet as Dr Steven Wright of Qatar University notes, the fact that the Emir grew up in such an internationalised climate punctuated by pan-regional phenomena cannot be ignored as an instigating factor in the development of ideas (the promotion of Al Jazeera, pursuing new, in depth international relations, etc.) that were subsequently enunciated by Hamad Bin Khalifah's policies.[515]

Secondly, Hamad Bin Khalifah was the first ruler in Qatar to study abroad. This experience at the UK's Sandhurst military training college exposed him to a world, to a discipline, and to new sets of ideas that would scarcely have been imaginable for his father. A new, rigorous education steeped in military logic, doctrine, and tactics may have given Hamad Bin Khalifah a new impression of Qatar's own history. For a cursory glance at the modern history of Qatar shows a perennial search for some kind of a suzerain. While great empires have guaranteed Qatar's security – the Ottomans and the British – they eventually left leaving Qatar looking for a replacement. Qatar seeking to broaden its international alliances under Hamad Bin Khalifah's stewardship can be seen in this context; of a small country seeking to diversify its dependencies.

Aside from the domestic angle stemming from the leadership itself, the adage that 'all politics is domestic' is never far from the surface in Qatar. For example, supporting the Palestinian cause naturally resonates approvingly with Qataris. Equally, there is often support for the more radical actors such as Hamas and Hezbollah, for they are viewed by many in Qatar (and the wider Arab region) as engaging in legitimate acts of defence against Israel.[516]

Aside from domestically-based motives in terms of international relations, the central reason for Qatar's investment activities stems from the domestic realm. Diversifying Qatar's economy and acquiring different income streams is fundamentally about securing Qatar's

[514] For a brief discussion of Al Jazeera and Sawt Al Arab in terms of similarities and differences see Morten Valbjorn and Andre Bank, "The New Arab Cold War: Rediscovering the Arab Dimention of Mddle East Regional Politics," *Review of International Studies* (2011): p.12-3.
[515] Personal Interview: Dr Steven Wright, Qatar University, 06 February 2013.
[516] Neil MacFarquhar, "Tide of Arab Opinion Turns to Support for Hezbollah," *The New York Times* 28 July 2006.

continued domestic growth. In Qatar as in other Gulf States, where traditional structures and understandings of ruling bargains combine with the modern rentier economy, it is the duty of the Emir to provide for his people without asking in return for taxes and such impositions. The QIA's role is to augment and ensure the longevity of the state's ability to maintain this bargain. When economic concerns threaten to undercut domestic expansion and curtail opportunities for Qataris, the QIA directly invested in Qatar's economy as in the financial crisis in 2008.[517]

It is interesting to note in comparison to most SWFs that seek smaller stakes in a greater range of companies or who engage in obtuse financial deals to make money, many of QIAs investments are relatively easy to understand. While behind the scenes there is complex debt-restructuring, on the surface the QIA often acquires stakes in companies or prestige 'trophy' assets. Not only this but many of the companies in question are engaged with tangible goods and services that Qataris could easily recognise: luxury hotels in Europe, German car manufacturers, Tiffany, Harrods and so on. Or if they are not tangible goods often the investment is in household names (Heathrow Airport's holdings, Shell, Siemens, etc.) Like all SWFs, the QIA is spending the country's money; the inheritance for future generations of Qataris. It is plausible to suggest that QIA's preference for recognised brand names and for investing in companies that sell recognisable products stems from a desire to show Qataris 'where their money is going.' Indeed, the fact is that Qataris more than most other citizens can easily see where their money is being invested by their SWF, if working out their return on their investment is difficult because of QIA's accounting secrecy.

Equally it is true that the QIA is personally driven by Hamad Bin Jassem. While a shrewd business man, he is not a banker or an accountant trained in abstract financial wizardry; he buys what he instinctively understands and takes advantage of opportunities presented to him as he travels around the world as Qatar's foreign minister.

## Regional

Once more the central importance of Saudi Arabia as a factor determining or at least shaping Qatar's foreign policy is evident. As the relationship soured as the early 1990s

[517] Asa Fitch, "Qatar Boosts Bank Stakes for the Second Time in Two Years," *The National*(31 December 2009)

progressed, America took up the mantle of protecting Qatar. Yet Qatar still faced more subtle challenges. After resting under the aegis of Saudi Arabia for so long, with their histories being so intertwined and with such little autonomous activity undertaken by Qatar over the years, there was an abiding need for Qatar's elite to differentiate itself. Seeking improved relations with Iran and Israel is one pronounced way to do that.

Nothing about traditional Saudi Arabian values and policies chimes with Hamad Bin Khalifah's world-view or proclivities. While he is a pious man, he appears to have no time for the rigidity that characterises the core of the Saudi state. Nor does he believe that women must play an anonymous, subservient role. Had Hamad Bin Khalifah followed the Saudi line he would never have entrusted the control to the multi-billion dollar-backed engine of social and educational change in Qatar, the Qatar Foundation, to his wife. He would not have enfranchised women to vote having announced in 1997 that he "saw nothing wrong with it"[518] and nor would he have sat beside his wife in an interview with CBS' 60 Minutes News Show in 2003 leaving Qataris in "complete shock – and not because of the emir's ruminations on the freedom and democracy...rather [Qataris] were focused on the woman sitting beside him. It was the first time that the vast majority of them had seen any of their first ladies."[519] Such progressive policies are antithetical to Saudi Arabia's ethos. Similarly, Hamad Bin Khalifah's policies indicate a pluralist world-view prizing debate and discussion among all actors, friend or foe; also not something that is typically found in the Saudi lexicon.

Crucially, the emerging elite atmosphere in Doha and the trajectory that was being fashioned was incompatible with Saudi Arabia's continuing role as a suzerain and, moreover, many of the policies were explicitly anti-Saudi in character. Were Hamad Bin Khalifah to have assembled a range of policies that would cause the most friction with Saudi Arabia the list would include offering women a prominent place in the public discourse, suggesting opening up the political arena with elections, improving relations with Iran, and

[518] CNN Interview quoted in Louay Y. Bahry, "Elections in Qatar: A Window of Democracy Opens in the Gule," *Middle East Policy* VI, no. 4 (June 1999).
[519] Danna Harman, "Backstory: The Royal Couple That Put Qatar on the Map," *The Christian Science Monitor*(5 March 2007)

establishing and improving relations with the Israel. [520] Qatar, for so long seen as little more than an appendage of the Saudi Arabian state, was resolute in its desire to separate itself from any association with Saudi Arabia and engaged in policies which are essentially the exact opposite of those of the Kingdom.

Aside from this focus on Saudi Arabia, other dynamics in the Gulf region were changing. A decade after the Iranian Revolution, in the aftermath of the Iran-Iraq War, and with the death of Ayatollah Khomeini in 1989 came an opportunity for change. Following his death and the exhaustion of the war, the Islamic Republic "downplayed its desire to spread its ideological message across the Gulf by propaganda and subversion."[521] The early years of Rafsanjani's tenure as President starting in 1989 were a period of rapprochement with Arab States and even with Saudi Arabia.[522] With an Iranian leadership open to improving relations and with the cover of the GCC's lessening anti-Iranian tone, Qatar took advantage of this opportunity to normalise relations with Iran.

Yet with or without a brief window of improved relations, the development of the North Field mandated that relations with Iran would have to change. If Qatar was to develop and extricate gas from the joint field, relations with Iran would have to be amicable if Qatar and those investing in the field were to have confidence that the Iranians would not interfere. It is under this rubric that a call for the UN Secretary General to intervene and calm Iraqi Iranian relations in 1985 can be best understood.[523] Furthermore, as Qatar then became increasingly reliant on revenues from the field via shipping its gas through the Strait of Hormuz, its vulnerability to Iran increased.

Commercial diplomacy has occasionally been used as a policy to improve relations with Iran. Importing water from Iran was one attempt to tie Iran into commercial ventures with Qatar to edge towards normalising their relationship. Despite unfulfilled initial plans to jointly invest $3 billion in the shared field in 1990, subsequent examples of cooperation are rare and quickly denied when they become public.[524] One potentially significant venture with Iran

[520] While Saudi Arabia was improving its relations with Iran in the early 1990s too this did not last long.
[521] Gause III, *Oil Monarchies*, p.134.
[522] Ibid., p.134-5.
[523] Searight, "Special Report on Qatar (3) : This Proud Aloof Nation."
[524] AP, "Iran-Qatar Gas Field," *New York Times*(14 November 1990)

and Russia was the proposed gas cartel.[525] While this idea has subsequently faded away, not least with poor Russian-Qatari relations, this remains a potent carrot that Qatar has to coax Iran into boosting its relations if it chooses to use it.[526]

Just as the brief rapprochement with Iran helped Qatar so too with Israel the 1991 Madrid Peace talks, the 1993 Oslo Accords, and the Israel-Jordan Treaty of Peace signed in 1994 construed a period of active negotiation by Arabs and Israelis that provided cover for Qatar to improve relations. This did not prevent Qatar from being lambasted by its GCC allies for engaging with the Israelis particularly as Arab-Israeli relations soured as the decades progressed, but it offered them initial rhetorical cover and an opportunity to engage.

Simultaneously, Qatar was also augmenting its relations with various Muslim groups. Like most regional states, Qatar had been long-term supporters of the Palestinian cause and was disappointed to hear Yasser Arafat defending Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Nevertheless, Qatar was the first state to propose a reconciliation in the early 1990s to Kuwait's displeasure. At a time when Qatar was boosting relations with Israel, such overtures were necessary for Qatar to maintain a sense of balance. Moreover, establishing relations with both sides potentially places Qatar and its financial resources in a powerful position to act as a broker to tackle the central conflict in the Arab world. Contributing to settling the Arab-Israeli conflict, doubtless a long-term aim of Qatar's rapprochement with Israel, would inscribe Qatar into the history books. Though this grand bid has failed thus far, Qatar still intervenes when it can. From seeking to secure the release of Gilad Shalit, the Israeli Defence Force soldier captured by Hamas in 2006 (which included Qatar accepting forty of the 'militants' released by Israel as part of the French-backed deal) to the 2012 engagement with Gaza, Qatar wants to reengage and be important in this seminal issue. [527]

Qatar's desire for greater engagement is a thread that runs through its international relations and its investments, yet Qatar does not always deploy its financial strength through the QIA. In 2012 and 2013 much of Qatar's financial assistance to Egypt came in the

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"Qatar National Bank Denies Investing in Iran Oilfield," *Reuters*(4 October 2009)

[525] "Iran, Qatar, Russia Form Gas Alliance," *Wall Street Journal*(22 October 2008)

[526] Iran and Russia are far keener on pursuing this idea than Qatar at the moment as Qatar no problems presently with its gas exports or price. However, this may change as Australian LNG in particular comes on stream as the 2010s progress.

[527] Michael Buchanan, "Freed Palestinian Prisoners Adapt to Qatar Exile ", *BBC News* (1 February 2012)

form of government-to-government assistance with at least $5bn worth of deposits and aid announced in addition to an estimated $18bn worth of investment promised by 2018.[528]

In return for these large and quickly-arranged investments that contributed to propping up the Egyptian economy at a precarious moment, Qatar wants to make itself important to Egypt. This is advantageous for a range of reasons. It has been suggested that Qatar could benefit from exemptions from foreign investment laws and Qatar will be the first to hear of emerging potentially lucrative large investment opportunities.[529] Yet it is diplomatically that Qatar could see the most returns. Egypt is a centrally important actor in Middle Eastern politics. It has significant influence across a wide range of issues, some of which have direct relevance to Qatar. The mediation in Darfur, access to Gaza, cooperation with policy on Syria or Iran, or in international bodies such as the Arab League are all key issues for Qatar where Egypt could have a profound effect. Examples of Egypt striving to stymie Qatar's activities in Darfur and in the Arab League are well known but could become a thing of the past.[530] In short, Egypt represents a great "prize" for Qatar and establishing good will with its elite is an understandable political goal of Qatar's leadership.[531]

## International

The invasion and liberation of Kuwait and the end of the Cold War came at a seminal moment for Qatar's emerging elite. As has been noted, they had been accruing and consolidating power since the mid-1980s with policy initiatives, cabinet reshuffles, and the creation of new, influential Supreme Councils. Midway through this consolidation of power the dominant structural system in the world changed more from 1989-1991 than at any time since the end of World War Two.[532] President George Bush summed up the aspirations of the resultant new world order in his post-Gulf War speech to Congress.

> And now, we can see a new world coming into view. A world in which there is the very real prospect of a new world order. In the words of Winston Churchill, a "world order" in which "the principles of justice and fair play . . . protect the weak against the strong." A world where the United Nations, freed

[528] AP, "Qatar Doubles Aid to Egypt," *The New York Times*(08 January 2013)
[529] Sultan Al Qassemi, "Qatar's Brotherhood Ties Alienate Fellow Gulf States," *Al Monitor*(23 January 2013)
[530] "Egyptian Dcm: Cairo to Thwart Any Qatari Initiative," in *Cablegate* (Doha, Qatar: Wikileaks, 28 January 2010).
[531] Personal Interview: Qatar-Based Diplomat, 26 March 2013.
[532] Joseph S. Nye, "What New World Order?," *Foreign Affairs* (1 March 1992): p.83.

> from cold war stalemate, is poised to fulfil the historic vision of its founders. A world in which freedom and respect for human rights find a home among all nations.[533]

The sense of optimism that greeted the fall of the Iron Curtain should not be forgotten. The tone of the new age, of collective action, of upholding international law and norms as personified in the defence of Kuwait was, at the start of the decade at least, deeply positive.[534] The cleavages and fears of the Cold War were over and while they would be replaced by new concerns (a 'jungle of snakes'), as trying as these new concerns would be they would not, it was believed, be as existentially pressing. The embodiment of the change that the end of the Cold War heralded can be found in Francis Fukuyama's contention that history itself was at an end.[535]

While Bush's speech marked an optimistic agenda for a new era, the promise of the 'New World Order' soon lost its lustre. Joseph Nye pointed out that when "reality intruded [and] grand schemes turned into a liability" the White House soon decided to dial down "the rhetorical volume."[536] Similarly, in an essay rejecting the assumed importance of the end of the Cold War on the Middle East, Karsh noted that it was not long before "euphoric predictions of a 'New World Order' and the 'End of History' …[were]…buried in the alleys of Sarajevo and the killing fields of Rwanda and Chechnya."[537] As Karsh cautions, it is important to refrain from blithely assuming that the end of the Cold War in the Middle East had the same dramatic effects as it did for the West and for the Soviet bloc.

Exactly what impression this lofty rhetoric had on the young elite in Qatar is difficult to say. What is clear, however, is that this kind of rhetoric; an appeal to and a pursuit of higher ideals characterises Qatar's approach across the policy spectrum. From domestic concerns with grand social and educational goals embodied in the Qatar Foundation to Qatar's diversification of international relations to previously *verboten* states like Iran and Israel, such policies are an encapsulation of the ethos of the new, post-Cold War age. Whether the

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[533] "After the War: The President; Transcript of President Bush's Address on End of the Gulf War," *New York Times* 7 March 1991.
[534] Efraim Karsh, "Cold War, Post-Cold War: Does It Make a Difference for the Middle East?," *Review of International Studies* 23(1997): p.271.
[535] Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Hamilton, 1992).
[536] "After the War: The President; Transcript of President Bush's Address on End of the Gulf War," p.83.
[537] Karsh, "Cold War, Post-Cold War: Does It Make a Difference for the Middle East?," p.271.

elite believed in this change or not, democracy had 'won' and it would have made sense to mirror America's rhetoric to display to the world's sole remaining superpower that Qatar sought to follow this vision.

Aside from rhetoric there would necessarily be changes in the international system with the collapse of one of the hegemons. Concepts such as regionalism, multilateralism, and statism were pushed to the fore. The bipolar world did not eliminate such concepts but "strengthened all three by co-opting and integrating them into the two superpower blocs. Any post-Cold War system therefore will involve [sic] the resurfacing of all three of these alternative structural configurations."[538]

Such a rejigging of the international system would be underscored, in the absence of a unipolar world and the centralisation inherent in the Cold War's structure, by a diffusion and decentralisation of power.[539] In this new world, the options for small states to act assertively and potentially take advantage to expand their influence would be far greater.

Though the structural dynamics of the Cold War and the post-Cold War system may not have been discussed in such technical ways in Hamad Bin Khalifah's Diwan or Majlis, to a practitioner the differences were obvious. Leaving aside the lofty aspiration inherent in the new era, without the Cold War zero-sum constraints of necessarily seeking to balance America, Soviet, and non-aligned blocks, a leader was freer to make his own decisions. Certainly difficulties were still present and balance still had to be maintained with other actors, but not having the concern of alienating one of the two superpowers in the febrile Cold War atmosphere was liberating.

Amid these strategic changes in the nature of international politics are tactical factors. With the perennial need to seek guarantees against worsening Saudi relations, Qatar sought to open a dialogue with America. However, though the paradigm was shifting with Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm and even though America wanted an opportunity to engage with Gulf States this took some time to come to fruition. From the Qatari perspective this meant that its initial overtures for some protective arrangement were, according to Hamad

[538] Philip G Cerny, "Plurilateralism: Structural Differentiation and Functional Conflict in the Post-Cold War World Orger," *Mullennium - Journal of International Studies* 22, no. 27 (1993): p.35.
[539] Ibid., p.28.

Bin Khalifah, rebuffed.[540] Needing to secure American protection, he continued to note that relations were boosted with Iran and Iraq to provoke America into coming to the negotiating table. Eventually, when overtures to Israel were undertaken, America became more amenable.

This explanation makes sense. For America, it could extract a concession to boost the regional support for its strongest ally in the Middle East – Israel – while such a gamble was not difficult for Qatar to undertake if it received US protection as it subsequently did. Given Qatar's subsequent decades of augmenting relations with Iran, the initial overtures cannot solely have been to force America's hand. The perseverance the elite showed in maintaining such a relationship indicates that this policy chimed with its own proclivities.

In the world of Qatari investments too there are strategic as well as tactical concerns. Qatar seeks not only financial returns on its investments, but it invests to accrue importance in and of itself. That Qatar owns 20 per cent of The London Stock Exchange and 20 per cent of Heathrow Airport's holding company not to mention an estimated £20 billion worth of QIA investment in London means that Qatar has bought far more than just financial influence.[541] Qatar has tied itself into two of the UK's most critical hubs – its stock exchange and its key airport – and will have a say in decisions surrounding them for as long as it holds the shares. Qatar's importance and visibility is increased and entrenched across segments of the British economy, while its moves to take these positions in the first place highlights Qatar's statesmanship and business savvy. With over £20 billion invested in a country's capital city, the Qatari Emir and Prime Minister can demand a meeting at any time of the day or night with anyone in the country. With such access and such investments comes influence. How much Qatar can affect British policies or secure votes in international organisations is debatable, but it is interesting to note that the UK and France, two of the countries that Qatar invests in the most, were the two countries that initially backed Qatari calls to arm the Syrian opposition.[542] Equally, Qatar's deep importance to the UK in terms of investment

[540] Salman, "An Old Dialogue with the Emir of Qatar in the Context Of: Israel Being a Gatekeeper of Arab Affiliation with Washington."
[541] Figure of Qatari investment comes from: Personal Interview: Doha-Based British Embassy Official, 20 February 2013.
[542] Cassell Bryan-Low, "Uk Boosts Support to Opposition Military," *The Wall Street Journal* 06 March 2013.

and gas sales are one of the key reasons that the UK is rethinking its security commitments and foreign policy towards the Gulf States in 2013.[543]

Outwith the Government sector Qatar longs to be referred to as a "kingmaker of corporate Britain" in a British broadsheet.[544] Even accounting for a certain hyperbole, such sentiments signal that Qatar is one of the central financial powers in one of the world's most important financial centres and this is where Qatar wants to place itself. Given not only the historic UK-Qatari connection, the Anglophile nature of Qatar's leadership, the economic downturn, and Qatar's huge financial reserves, there cannot be an influential trader or banker in London that is not familiar with Qatar and the QIA.

It is not just the UK that has such a close relationship with Qatar for there is a Francophile streak too in the Qatari elite too stemming from decades of close business contacts, military sales, and the Qatari penchant for acquiring property in France under beneficial tax regimes.[545] Qatar's investments in France have been mounting steadily in recent years, if not quite matching the scale and depth of investments in the UK. Prime property on the Champs-Élysées, a string of luxury hotels, and important French conglomerates have been acquired as has Paris St Germain, the Paris-based football club, which was bought by a fund under the control of Tamim Bin Hamad, Qatar Sports Investments (QSI). As ever, these acquisitions are expected to be financially sound and profitable, while they cement ties with an important state sitting on the UN Security Council and with an important military presence in the Gulf.

The question of political influence in France is equally interesting. In particular, there are concerns that Qatar used its relationship with key members of the French elite to boost its chances of winning the right to host the FIFA World Cup in 2022.[546] Such accusations have been denied and rejected by football's European governing body, UEFA. Nevertheless, this

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Geraldine Amiel and Laurence Norman, "France Urges Eu to End Arms Embargo on Syria," *The Wall Street Journal* 14 March 2013.

[543] Richard Norton-Taylor, "Defence Chief Signals Major Uk Military Presence in Gulf," *The Guardian*(18 December 2012)

[544] Rupert Neate, "Qatar Nurtures Its City Assets: From the Shard to Glencore Shares," ibid. 27 June 2012.

[545] Scott Sayare, "Qatar Is Becoming a Player in French Sports," *The New York Times* 26 October 2012.

[546] David Conn, "Qatar Cash Is Stirring French Football Revolution at Paris St Germain," *The Guardian* 22 November 2011.

James Dorsey, "Qatar's Love Affair with France Consummated with Soccer," *Huffington Post* (25 October 2012)

kind of tangential and esoteric *quid pro quo* is exactly what Qatar's relations are about; establishing and bolstering bilateral relations so that Qatar can extract support as and when it needs it on important matters.

In 2011 and 2012 Qatar was the top European property buyer, driven primarily by purchases in London and Paris.[547] However, Qatar's investment is far from limited to the UK and France. The QIA took large stakes in companies in China as well as acquiring a licence to invest up to $5 billion in Yuan-listed Chinese companies.[548] Elsewhere, the QIA established a $5 billion fund to invest in Greece in the midst of the financial crisis, sought up to $10 billion of investment in Malaysia, and up to $1 billion in Vietnam.[549] In these smaller countries such large investments will give Qatar significant influence so while Qatar may make a profit, it will also boost relations to prepare for the day when it can call in its *quid pro quo* should, for example, Qatar need a vote in an international institution.

Lastly, a European diplomat based in Qatar noted the profound effect that a significant QIA purchase had in his home country. He described his phone as subsequently "ringing off the hook" with business delegations curious to know about this seemingly rich country called Qatar.[550] This deal and others that soon followed were directly responsible for numerous trade delegations coming to Qatar to seek business opportunities. Numerous goals of Qatar's policy are visible in this instance from Qatar boosting its visibility, encouraging further investment and further opportunities for Qatari investment, as well as making Qatar a recognised and more important state to a key European country.

## Al Jazeera

The concept of a new Qatar-based TV channel dates back at least to August 1994 and was first envisioned by then Crown Prince Hamad Bin Khalifah.[551] After discussion and debate as to the format and the overarching holding company (use the existing Qatar TV or create a

[547] Tom Bill, "Qatar Top Sovereign Europe Property Buyer with Six Weeks Gas Cash," *Reuters*(17 August 2012)
[548] "China Grants Qatar Fund Qfii Licence: Report," *Market Watch: The Wall Street Journal*(07 October 2012)
[549] Harry Papachristou and Ingrid Melander, "Qatar Signs Deal to Invest Uo Tp $5bn in Greece," *Reuters*(24 September 2010)
Courtney Trenwith, "Qatar to Invest $10bn in Malaysia - Report," *ArabianBusiness.com*(30 January 2013)
"Qatar and Vietnam Set up Agriculture Fund," *Reuters*(03 September 2008)
[550] Personal Interview: Qatar-Based European Diplomat, 06 April 2010.
[551] Louay Y. Bahry, "The New Arab Media Phenomenon: Qatar's Al-Jazeera," *Middle East Policy* 8, no. 2 (2001): p.89.

new entity) on 01 November 1996 Al Jazeera aired its first broadcast. Though it was not an overnight success, within two years it had made inroads into traditional news media coverage and was noted as "the most influential Arab TV channel."[552] When Al Jazeera's cameras were the only ones broadcasting from Baghdad as Operation Desert Fox in December 1998 struck the Iraqi capital, Al Jazeera came to the fore.[553] Subsequently, Al Jazeera became a fixture of the Middle East landscape and prompted a paradigm shift in Arab media.

Al Jazeera was truly revolutionary. Never before had there been an Arab television news broadcast as outspoken, as outlandish, as watched, and as influential. Previously most people tended to distrust and dismiss media outlets as little less than uncritical Government propaganda. While the BBC, Voice of America, and French radio Monte Carlo broadcast popular radio broadcasts in Arabic these were nevertheless foreign in origin.[554] Al Jazeera was the first to successfully tap the latent Arab desire for news with a semblance of impartiality. The fact that Al Jazeera's coverage was so salacious added to its appeal.

Al Jazeera courted controversy (and viewers) by showing video messages from Osama Bin Laden, though it never showed beheadings as is often claimed. It interviewed Israeli spokespeople for the first time on an Arab channel, a popular but controversial move.[555] Its reputation garnered countless exclusives across the world, such as covering the destruction of the giant Buddhas in Afghanistan in March 2001, while the brand of Al Jazeera has been noted as one of the most recognised brands in the world.[556] It has caused practically every Arab State to complain to the Emir of Qatar at some stage, while the Algerian Government went one step further on 27 January 1999 when it shut down power to its capital city and other major cities to prevent an Al Jazeera interview from being broadcast with a dissident

[552] Ibid., p.91.
[553] Shawn Powers and Eytan Gilboa, "The Public Diplomacy of Al Jazeera," in *New Media and the New Middle East* ed. Philip M Seib (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p.55.
[554] Bahry, "The New Arab Media Phenomenon: Qatar's Al-Jazeera," p.90.
[555] El Mustapha Lahlai, *Contemporary Arab Broadcast Media* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), p.80.
[556] Larissa Bender, "Al Jazeera - the Enigma from Qatar," *Qantara.de*(6 November 2006)
"Al Jazeera's Brand Name News," *Foreign Policy*(18 April 2005)

diplomat and an exiled journalist.[557] Much of this success is based on two fortuitous instances of happenstance.

First, on 24 March 1994 a Saudi consortium and the BBC signed a ten year agreement to establish BBC Arabic.[558] Predictably, this arrangement was soon scuppered. The interview of a prominent Saudi cleric suffered from a mysterious power cut in January 1996, while a BBC Panorama documentary months later critical of Saudi Arabia was the final straw.[559] The BBC channel was replaced with the Disney channel a week later and a whole news room – presenters, producers, researchers, technicians – was looking for work. Al Jazeera, a venture still largely on the planning table in Doha, gladly took advantage of this serendipity and hired 120 of the professional BBC journalists.[560]

Second, even after Al Jazeera was up and running, its audience was small. It was limited by the capacity that the Arab Satellite Corporation's satellite could offer; a measly 'Ku-Band' transponder, when it coveted a strong (and unavailable) 'C-band' transponder, which would augment the number of viewers who could receive the Al Jazeera signal.[561] Happily for Al Jazeera mid-afternoon in July 1997 Canal France International (CFI), while meant to be showing a children's educational show, instead broadcast half an hour of *Club Privé au Portugal*, a hard-core pornographic film, to up to thirty-three million Arabs.[562] CFI lost its C-band transponder and Al Jazeera took up the contract, increased its air-time to seventeen hours per day and never looked back.

After expanding coverage to 24 hours per day in 1999 the Al Jazeera range expanded in the next decade with Al Jazeera sports emerging from November 2003; Al Jazeera Mubasher (live), a C-Span like channel, in April 2005; Al Jazeera children's channel in September 2005; Al Jazeera English in November 2006; Al Jazeera Documentary Channel in 2007; Al Jazeera Misr, a 24-hour channel dedicated solely to Egyptian coverage in 2011; and Turkish-based and American-based Al Jazeera platforms in 2013.

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[557] Mohammed El-Nawawy and Adel Iskander, *Al-Jazeera : How the Free Arab News Network Scooped the World and Changed the Middle East*, First edition; hardback ed. (Cambridge, MA: Westview, 2002), p.112.
[558] Hugh Miles, *Al-Jazeera : How Arab Tv News Challenged the World* (London: Abacus, 2006), p.31.
[559] See Hugh Miles' excellent book for a more in-depth look at this episode ibid., p.32.
[560] Bahry, "The New Arab Media Phenomenon: Qatar's Al-Jazeera," p.90.
[561] Miles, *Al-Jazeera : How Arab Tv News Challenged the World*, p.35.
[562] Ibid., p.36.

Despite belonging to the same overarching brand and reporting ultimately to the same controlling editors, Al Jazeera English and Arabic are poles apart. From the beginning the English Channel was a slick production similar in appearance to existing US and UK-based rivals, with staff being hired from the major Western TV organisations including household names like David Frost. It was pursuing viewers in the same market as the BBC and CNN and thus its tone and style were similar even if its focus was more on the 'global south orientation' to much acclaim.[563] In comparison to English's more reserved character, Al Jazeera Arabic's coverage could be described as sensationalist and provocative; a true adherent to the media cliché of 'if it bleeds, it leads.'[564] When Arab States complain to the Emir of Qatar about Al Jazeera they are almost always referring to Al Jazeera Arabic.[565]

In terms of reach and influence Al Jazeera's English Channel is negligible compared to Al Jazeera Arabic. This is often forgotten or ignored from a Western-focused perspective; many may watch the English broadcasts and fail to see what all the fuss is about. A brief perusal of some of the lead shows in Arabic, however, in particular الإتجاه المعاكس (The Opposite Direction) and the platform for Sheikh Yusuf Al Qaradawi الشريعة والحياة (Religion and Life) would show a vastly different side to Al Jazeera.

The former is a fast-pace debating show often pitting representatives from opposite ends of the spectrum against each other. Bahry rightly describes *The Opposite Direction* as "undoubtedly the most popular and most controversial political talk show in the history of Arab television."[566] While the format itself was not new it was the novelty of seeing some of the guests on the show that was the change. Erik Nisbet, a US-based academic who has focused on anti-Americanism in Arab media, writes that Al Jazeera "took press freedom to the extreme" noting that some of their guests may be the equivalent of a major American

[563] Steve Clarke, "Al Jazeera Wins Rts Award," *Variety*(23 February 2012)
Marwan M Kraidy, "Al Jazeera and Al Jazeera English: A Comparative Institutional Analysis," in *Annenberg School for Communication Departmental Papers* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2008), p.25.

[564] This kind of characterisation can be found not only in the literature but from a brief sampling of the two channels' products.
Sherry Ricchiardi, "The Al Jazeera Effect," *American Journalism Review*(March & April 2011)

[565] While a few documentaries such as English's 'Shouting in the Dark,' an expose focusing on Bahrain, have caused friction, such instances are simply not rated as that important by Arab Governments. Their core concern is not with Al Jazeera pushing its propaganda (as they would see it) towards the international audience but towards an Arab audience.

[566] Bahry, "The New Arab Media Phenomenon: Qatar's Al-Jazeera," p.92.

network inviting members of the Klu Klux Clan onto a prime-time discussion show.[567] Though shrill and not a perfect analogy, there is some truth to such a comparison.

The latter, Al Qaradawi's show, has been a place for him for the past fifteen years to dispense advice on any and all topics from the mundane to the most political. His audience is an estimated 60 million per week cementing his place as the Muslim Brotherhood's leading intellectual.[568]

Never a stranger to controversy, in the Arab Spring Al Jazeera has become the story itself, at least to some in the Arab World. Initially, Al Jazeera's coverage of the emerging Spring in Tunisia and then Egypt was lauded, though there was an initial lag in the coverage of Tahrir Square with those at Al Jazeera not wanting to be tagged as having 'created' and exaggerated the disturbances. Nevertheless, its in-depth coverage with reporters strewn around key cities and a fearless desire to report the story was appreciated. However, there has been an increasing backlash against what some see as Al Jazeera's slavish reportage of the Muslim Brotherhood in an uncritical manner.[569] This is tied in with Qatar's overt support of the Muslim Brotherhood, which has, in conjunction with the replacement of long-term Director Wadah Khanfar with a member of the ruling Qatari Royal Family in September 2011, meant that Al Jazeera's reputation has been tarnished with accusations that it is now little more than a mouthpiece for Qatar's foreign policy. While such claims are over-exaggerated, Al Jazeera has certainly lost traction and is losing viewers to competing outlets.[570]

## Domestic

As ever the basic domestic realities of Qatar facilitated the creation of Al Jazeera in two particular ways. Firstly, the fact that the elite was so powerful meant that they could establish whatever institutions they wished. Al Jazeera is not an organic growth stemming from Qatari civil society. Al Jazeera's attitude towards including Israelis in the conversation,

[567] Quoted in Ricchiardi, "The Al Jazeera Effect".
[568] Alexander Smoltczyk, "The Voice of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood," *Spiegel Online International*(15 February 2011)
[569] Michael Peel, "Al Jazeera Coverage Raises Tough Questions," *The Financial Times* 04 January 2013.
Sultan Al Qassemi, "Morsi's Win Is Al Jazeera's Loss," *Al Monitor*(01 July 2012)
[570] "Must Do Better."

fostering debate on political topics, the discussion of women's rights and of controversial religious issues is at odds with Qatar's intrinsic conservatism.

Secondly, Qatar's significant financial resources allowed Al Jazeera's continued growth even at huge costs. The initial grant of money for Al Jazeera was an estimated $137 million while its annual running costs are estimated to be between $25 and $100 million annually with Al Jazeera English's launch needing an investment of up to $1 billion.[571] With Qatar's January 2013 $500 million acquisition of Al Gore's Current TV, a plan to vastly expand Al Jazeera's reach in America, which includes the hiring of hundreds of new staff, its cost on the Qatari state is likely to increase significantly in the short term.[572] Furthermore, Al Jazeera has found it difficult to offset its costs with advertising. Historically Saudi Arabia put unbearable pressure on companies that advertised on Al Jazeera to pull out, driving up costs for the station.[573] Similarly with Al Jazeera's often negative coverage particularly in right-wing elements of the American landscape, Al Jazeera could find accruing advertising revenue challenging.[574] That Qatar can quite easily afford such luxuries as a TV station is thanks to the hydrocarbon resources, which is a basic enabler of Qatar's hosting of Al Jazeera that cannot be forgotten.

One of the central tenets of the new Qatari policies in the 1990s was a desire to be seen and to be heard. Al Jazeera is the apogee of this thrust; to shatter the old cliché of Qatar being 'known for being unknown.' It gave Qatar a uniquely powerful comparative advantage over all other Arab States to be the centre of a new wave of information dissemination in the region. In this sense it is similar to *Sawt Al Arab*, which was similarly useful for Nasser's Egypt even if this was more politically skewed to pontificating about a particular system of Government.

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[571] Bahry, "The New Arab Media Phenomenon: Qatar's Al-Jazeera," p.95.
Miles, *Al-Jazeera : How Arab Tv News Challenged the World*, p.67.
Shawn Powers, "The Origins of Al Jazeera English," in *Al Jazeera English: Global News in a Changing World*, ed. Philip M Seib (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p.8.
[572] Kevin Voigt, "Al Jazeera Buys Al Gore's Current Tv," *CNN International*(03 January 2013)
[573] Bahry, "The New Arab Media Phenomenon: Qatar's Al-Jazeera," p.95.
[574] For a brief snapshot of the criticism of Al Jazeera see:
Jonathan S Tobin, "The Al Jazeera Liberal," *Commentary*(01 April 2013)
Oren Kessler, "The Two Faces of Al Jazeera," *The Middle East Quarterly* XIX, no. 1 (Winter 2012).

The creation of Al Jazeera is also a savvy asymmetric move. Qatar does not have a population, a land-mass, a military or a diaspora to exert influence, all it has is money. While this can certainly wield some power, by creating Al Jazeera and thanks to its remarkable popularity in the early 2000s, Qatar became for the first time preeminent in its region in a particular role. Whether it was the elite growing up at the time of *Sawt Al Arab* and seeing the power of pan-regional media, seeing the embedded CNN cameras in the Gulf War, or understanding that the media revolution could not be stopped but needed to be embraced, the decision was savvy and timely.

## Regional

Qatar's old international dynamic exuded a logic whereby it deliberately eschewed significant international attention. However, following Kuwait's invasion anonymity – Qatar's previously default position – became a detrimental quality. Given that 'the worst' clearly can happen, under such a circumstance a leader wants his country to be well known. He does not want leaders around the world, foreign soldiers or their families potentially being sent to rescue his country to be searching for a map noting that they never knew there was a country beginning with the letter 'Q.' Several strategies of the new elite are ranged against reversing Qatar's previous anonymity, with Al Jazeera in particular being a central plinth in the desire to actively publicise the country.

For Qatar in the early 1990s the rhetorical problems with Saudi Arabia soon became a threatening military confrontation in 1992 with the border skirmish. That America was in the process of signing up to a protective arrangement was reassuring but still the elite deliberately sought to publicise the incident, further angering Riyadh. From this perspective, with an increasingly vociferous Saudi Arabia and with plans afoot to further antagonise the Kingdom with Hamad Bin Khalifah's raft of new policies, it would have been understandable had Qatar started Al Jazeera with the sole aim of giving Qatar a public, international media platform to use in case it needed to, in an emergency, broadcast escalating concerns stemming from its Saudi border without relying on anyone else.

Indeed, in this context Al Jazeera can be thought of as either a unique form of deterrence or at least comprising a bow in the Qatari self-defence quiver. For any state - but particularly for a state that is far from well known - having an indigenous media organ that has the

potential to publicise mounting tensions or concerns is useful. While using Al Jazeera in such a capacity was unlikely to be needed, an equally unlikely event – the invasion of Kuwait – had just occurred.

Aside from such serious concerns personal politics is as important as ever. The Qatari elite knew perfectly well what would happen if it gave a BBC trained crew carte blanche in editorial control; naturally the seasoned reporters would pursue the most salacious topics in the region. With the Emir explicitly not setting any boundaries, the sacred cows that had henceforth been unassailable were suddenly fair game. Burgeoning audience figures showed that Al Jazeera's desire to poke, prod, and report on elite politics across the Gulf and Middle East was wildly popular. In this context Al Jazeera can be seen as one of Qatar's most significant ways to antagonise Saudi Arabia. Qatar has no diplomatic, economic, or military weight with which to bully as large a state as Saudi Arabia. Instead, it can, via Al Jazeera, embarrass the Kingdom with coverage of its Royal family's disputes and speak to Saudi dissidents. Whether instigated purposefully by the elite or as a natural but expected corollary of unleashing Al Jazeera, it was certain to cause friction between Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Aside from any personal animus or a desire to hit back at the mighty Saudi Arabia, it was a prime way to remind the elite in Riyadh that Qatar was an independent state and would resolutely not do as it was told anymore.

Al Jazeera can also be seen as influencing the region's wider politics. Giving Yusuf Al Qaradawi, the Muslim Brotherhood's leading cleric, access to Al Jazeera and tens of millions of viewers is a deeply political decision. Understandably it is construed as another example of Qatar supporting the Muslim Brotherhood. However, Qatar's elite is not doing this because of a philosophical or religious connection but for reasons of *realpolitik.* Understanding the central role that religion plays in the region, Qatar is pragmatically facilitating one of the most popular organised, and relatively moderate political parties in the Middle East.

## International

'News framing' is a standard technique in fields associated with media analysis and social psychology that seeks to categorise eras in news coverage. An infamously difficult topic to specifically define, a news frame refers to the whole normative structure at a given time

that provides the backdrop, assumed values, and typical narratives that coalesce into any given 'frame.' As Norris notes, "Frames represent stereotypes."[575] In terms of the Cold War frame she identifies the key characteristics.

> The Cold War frame highlighted certain events as international problems, identified sources, offered normative judgements, and recommended particular policy solutions. Specifically, the Cold War frame depicted international events in terms of rivalry between two major superpowers and ranged other countries into "friends" and "enemies" of these superpowers. Warfare in Vietnam...or Afghanistan could be interpreted as internal power struggles provoked by religious, ethnic, or regional civil wars...Alternatively, these conflicts could be seen in terms of international rivalry for global ascendency...interests were defined in large part by virtue of opposition to Soviet allies. This led to a policy framework in which American involvement in the Middle East, Latin America, or Southeast Asia was justified by a policy of containment.[576]

Eras change and with them change the news frames. Norris highlights that the end of the Cold War provided a clearly identifiable change in backdrop, assumed values (for example, of the 'enemy'), and of typical narratives, which changed quite profoundly the American news frame entering the post-Cold War world.[577] In the Middle Eastern context there is no similarly detailed qualitative and quantitative study as Norris'. Yet the media revolution(s) that occurred in the Arab World in the 1990s manifestly stemmed from the emancipation in the post-Cold War era.[578]

Specifically in terms of Al Jazeera, in addition to the other instances of happenstance already mentioned (Qatar having the funds, a leadership interested in establishing such a TV network, etc.), Al Jazeera needed end of the Cold War era in order to be established. It would have been too difficult to attempt to tread a neutral line amid Cold War rivalries and would have resulted in either an emasculated TV network or angering one of the superpowers; not a pleasant prospect for an intrinsically defenceless state that sought some

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[575] Pippa Norris, "The Restless Searchlight: Network News Framing of the Post-Cold War World," *Political Communication* 12(1995): p.358.
[576] Ibid., p.358-9.
[577] Ibid., p.358.
[578] Sofiane Sahraoui and Mohamed Zayani, *The Culture of Al Jazeera: Indide an Arab Media Giant* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company Inc., 2007), p.16.
See a broad discussion of the emerging Middle Eastern media landscape Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi, "The Media and Democratization in the Middle East: The Strance Case of Television," *Democratization* 5, no. 2 (1998). And Marc Lynch, *Voices of the New Arab Public* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006).

notion of non-alignment. The profound changes in the international system allowed Qatar to position itself in such a way (with US guarantees) as to be able to host an entity such as Al Jazeera.

On a more general level it was the international lacuna in the Middle East media landscape that allowed the Qataris to steal such a march on the competition and be the first to establish a professional and popular media organisation. The power of the media had only recently been demonstrated to great effect in the Middle East during Operation Desert Storm. While the definition is contested, the eponymous 'CNN effect' entered the lexicon as a phrase for describing the vastly increasing range, popularity and in some cases impact of media in the post-Cold War world.[579] Definitions aside, a doctorate in media studies was not needed to see the revolution in TV coverage unfolding with CNN's coverage of Operation Desert Storm.

Yet indigenous to the Middle East itself there was no such media organisation; a chasm into which the Qataris stepped and established Al Jazeera. As such they benefitted from 'first mover advantage' and remain today seen as the pioneers. In addition to being in control of the Middle East's most powerful media outlet for years until competition inevitably pared down the Al Jazeera share, the act of founding Al Jazeera mirrored the ethos of the age. What better way to evidence Qatar's desire to reorient itself along broadly progressive lines, than an iconoclastic, revolutionary, popular TV news channel to both advertise and demonstrate a new understanding of the emerging Qatar to the international community?

## Soft Policies: MICE, Sport, Culture and Education

This section looks at a range of 'soft power' policies in Qatar including the Meetings, Incentives, Conference, and Exhibitions (MICE) industry; the sports industry; cultural promotion and education in Qatar. Though not exactly analogous, there are numerous similarities between these industries particularly in terms of the underlying reasons as to why they are supported, the goals that they are trying to achieve, and the methods by which the goals are to be achieved. Moreover, all of them contribute quite specifically to promoting a Qatari form of soft power in the guise of a coherent brand. This synopsis of

[579] Eytan Gilboa, "Global Television News and Foreign Policy: Debating the Cnn Effect," *International Studies Perspectives* 6(2005): p.335.

these industries highlights that while there were elements of these industries pursued pre-1990, their promotion in Qatar as the 1990s and 2000s progressed was of a different order of magnitude.

The MICE industry is widely regarded as a lucrative sector of tourism, which can contribute to a country's economy with MICE visitors seen as unusually high spenders; at the "blue-chip" end of the industry.[580] Amid a wider trend to shift marketing focuses "away from simply increasing the numbers of tourists to enhancing 'the quality' associated with tourism growth"[581] the MICE sector is thus "one of the fastest growing segments of world tourism."[582]

In recent years Asia and Australasia have been a hive of MICE activity. Cities like Singapore, Bangkok, Hong Kong, and Sydney have increased their capacity to attract more MICE industry to accrue the knock on economic and other benefits.[583] More recently, Dubai has entered this crowded market as has Doha. Indeed, Doha is currently coming-of-age in terms of its MICE industry potential. Plans many years in the making are coming to fruition and providing Qatar with a world-leading MICE infrastructure. Qatar's £1.15bn National Convention Centre (QNCC), opened in December 2011, is the embodiment of Qatar's push to augments its MICE credentials under the Qatar Foundation (QF) banner, while its world-spanning and award winning airline is used to spread Qatar's brand and fly tourists and businesspeople to Doha in style.[584]

While the marketing hype predictably describes the QNCC as being "built to be one of the most sophisticated convention and exhibition centre in the world," there is some justification to this hyperbole. No expense has been spared on the cavernous convention centre, from its ostentatious 'Sidra tree' external design, to its curved escalators that serve

[580] Meredity Lawrence and Vicienne McCabe, "Managing Conference in Regional Areas: A Practival Evaluation in Conference Management," *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 14, no. 4 (2001): p.204.
[581] Larry Dwyer and Peter Forsyth, "Economic Measures of Tourism Yield: What Markets to Target?," *International Journal of Tourism Research* 10(2008): p.155.
[582] Nina Mistilis and Larry Dwyer, "Tourism Gateways and Regional Economies: The Distributional Impacts of Mice," ibid.1(1999): p.441.
[583] Jack Carlsen, "A Review of Mice Industry Evaluation and Resarch in Asia and Australia 1988-1998," *Journal of Convention & Exhibition Management* 1, no. 4 (1999): p.52.
[584] John Peterson, "Qatar's International Role: Branding, Investment and Policy Projection," in *Policy Brief* (Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, February 2013).

no real purpose past the fact that QF can say that they are the first in the Middle East, to the multi-million dollar 30x33ft Louise Bourgeois spider sculpture, to its 'first in the Middle East' LEED Gold Environmental rating.[585] AEG Ogden, the QNCC's management company, insist that it exceeded its first year targets within seven months, boasting an estimated economic impact of nearly £20m from 128,000 visitors attending 128 events in the first seven months of operation.[586] At the end of 2012 Qatar hosted the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change conference (COP 18), one of the largest conferences in the world showcasing Qatar's ability to logistically host world-level events.

Qatar's desire to attract important conferences is not new. In 2001 it hosted the Doha WTO round of negotiations, entering 'the Doha round' into the vernacular of trade discussion. Otherwise, Qatar inaugurated a 'permanent committee for organising conferences' in 2004 under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This body oversaw up to fifteen significant conferences per year including Qatar's regular 'Interfaith Dialogue,' the 'US-Islamic World Forum,' and the 'Doha Forum.' The elite-led push to make Qatar a centre for discussion and dialogue knows no bounds. Tens of conferences are arranged every month by some Ministry, Supreme Council, or organisation. These range from the Pipeline Integrity Management Forum, the Underground Infrastructure and Deep Foundations Conference to key mini-conferences or 'contact groups' focusing on Libya and Syria. Qatar also hosts (and pays for) conferences for institutions that Qatar is neither a member of nor a candidate for membership such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, whose 2009 conference was supported by the Qatar Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[587] Aside from the QNCC, the Qatar Tourism Authority will open its own convention centre in 2013 of roughly equal size and sophistication. Given that nearly 10 per cent of Qataris could be seated in these two convention centres, quite clearly Qatar's ambitions are firmly set on international markets.

Underpinning these projects to attract MICE Industries is a reputed $17 billion investment in Qatar's tourism infrastructure in terms of constructing meeting facilities, resorts, and

[585] The Leadership in Energy and Environment Design (LEED) is an independent programme established by the US Green Building Council.
"'Gold Certification' for Convention Centre," *Gulf Times*(10 May 2012)
[586] "Qatar National Convention Centre Records Robust Growth," *Breaking Travel news*(21 May 2012)
[587] Thanks to Kristian Ulrichsen for pointing this out.

hotels.[588] Equally, between Stenden University and the QF sponsored MICE Development Institute (QMDI), Qatar is building up its capacity in hospitality management and associated areas necessary to facilitate its push to be a world-class MICE destination.

Another mechanism for boosting Qatar's popularity and spreading its message is hosting sporting events. While Qatar hosted the Asian Cup (football) in 1988, the FIFA Under-20 football World Cup in 1995, and an annual ATP Tennis event from 1993, it was particularly after the millennium that Qatar emerged as a key world centre of sport. The 2000s saw Qatar hosting regional (Asian) Handball, Basketball, Sailing, Indoor Athletics, and Fencing Championships as well as World Table Tennis and Weightlifting championships. Qatar also hosts top-class annual Tennis, PGA Golf, Moto Racing, Equestrian, and Athletics events. 2006 saw Qatar host the Asian Games, the largest sporting event to date held in the country, and in 2011 the Asian Football Cup, another large and prestigious sporting event. Clearly, winning the right to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup, the second largest sporting event on earth, is the pinnacle of Qatar's sporting ambitions

A key part in Qatar's plan to make itself a world centre for sport is its investment in sporting infrastructure. Doha boasts one of the world's best sporting hubs in its Aspire Zone. A complex including a world-class sports-injury hospital and one of the world's largest indoor sporting arenas fit for multiple sports, Aspire acts as an international academy for athletes at youth and professional levels.[589] Qatar's investment has extended to not only paying large sums to persuade older football (soccer) stars to play in Qatar's domestic league (Pep Guardiola, Ronald De Boer, Gabriel Batistuta, Nene, etc.) but also to paying athletes to change nationality to represent Qatar in tournaments, and for luring top-class football teams to Aspire for mid-season breaks.

In terms of wider cultural sponsorship, the Qatari Government has undertaken a variety of initiatives that when taken together construe a cohesive policy to garner a reputation for Qatar as a cultural hub. The overt promotion of Qatar as a cultural hot-spot is a direct, planned elite-led project comprising different strands. The New York-based Tribeca film

[588] Dominic Ellis, "Qatar's Conference Scent Is About to Change Beyond All Recognition..." *Middle East MICE & Events* 30 June 2011.
[589] Andrew England, "Qatar Pursues Sporting Goals with African Aid," *The Financial Times* 21 August 2009.

festival first came to Qatar in 2009 and has been an annual fixture since held under the auspices of the Doha Film Institute (DFI).[590] Against the backdrop of emerging film industries and competing festivals in nearby Dubai and Abu Dhabi, the Tribeca has been successful at attracting Hollywood Stars, film premieres, and international press coverage.[591] Some even hope that this will catalyse the start of a Qatari 'film industry.'[592] Towards this goal there has been significant success; the 2012 Tribeca in Qatar hosts a total of 19 films that have been made in Qatar.[593]

Given Qatar's relative youth as a country it has quickly developed a world-wide reputation in the art world. The Museum of Islamic Art on Doha's corniche contains an impressive array of artefacts from all walks of Islamic heritage. IM Pei was coaxed out of semi-retirement to design the museum with carte blanche, while luminaries ranging from Damien Hirst, Jeff Koons to Robert De Niro and Ronnie Wood attended the glitzy opening in 2008.[594]

The personification of Qatar's push into the art world is Sheikha Al Mayassa Bint Hamad Al Thani, a daughter of Hamad Bin Khalifah and Moza Bint Nasser. She has become one of the largest art buyers in the world with a taste for Mark Rothko, Francis Bacon, Andy Warhol, and Paul Cezanne for whose 'The Card Players' she paid the highest price ever for a work of art sold at auction, approximately £156 million.[595] In total Sheikha Al Mayassa is believed to have amassed a £650 million collection to add to existing works in Qatar bought for over £1 billion throughout the 1990s and 2000s by the now disgraced Sheikh Saud Bin Mohammed Al Thani.[596] Sotheby's opened its first Middle East office in Qatar in 2008 and Doha is now, along with London, New York, and Tokyo, a stopping-off point for exhibitions of major Sotheby's art sales tours.[597]

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[590] Amy Yee, "Qatar Sets Scene for Film Industry," *Financial Times*, 11 February 2009.
[591] Larry Rother, "Mixing Oil and Hollywood: Tribeca Festival Expands to the Persian Gulf," *The New York Times* 23 October 2009.
[592] Daniel Bardsley, "Qatar Aims to Build Film Industry," *The National* 21 August 2009.
[593] "'Made in Qatar' Showcase at 2012 Doha Tribeca Film Festival," *AMEInfo.com*(23 October 2012)
[594] Georgina Adam, "Fireworks as Qatar Steals the Show," *Financial Times*, 29 November 2008.
[595] Tahira Yaqoob, "Can Billion-Dollar Investment Put Qatar on the Cultural Map?," *The Independent* 20 October 2012.
[596] Rob Sharp, "Qatar Hero? The Sheikh Who Shook up the Art World," ibid. 29 June 2011.
[597] "Sotheby's Exhibition at Katara," *Gulf Times* 22 October 2012.

In addition to being the third place after Los Angeles and Versailles to host a significant Takashi Murakami exhibition (for which the Museum Authority built an exhibition hall especially on the orders of Murakami), Qatar has the clout to obtain objects from museums that even America's established institutions cannot procure as in the 'Gifts of the Sultan' exhibition.[598] The Qatar Museum's Authority (QMA) also seeks to lavishly sponsor key retrospectives in some of the world's most established museums as with the Damien Hirst retrospective at London's Tate Modern in 2012.[599] Overall, there is more than a passing desire to establish a reputation in the art world; instead there is ample evidence of a well-funded and systematic policy of placing Qatar at the forefront of this industry.

The same sense of a well-funded and well-crafted policy is evident in education in Qatar; indeed, since Hamad Bin Khalifah came to power in 1995 the education system has changed beyond all recognition. Spearheading this educational revolution is his most prominent wife, Moza Bint Nasser. Under her guidance and at her request in 2003 the American consultancy RAND established itself in Qatar and set to work analysing the existing educational system from top to bottom. RAND's research methodology, conclusions, options, and suggestions have been exhaustively documented at each stage and reveal a fascinating story.[600]

The overhaul started from the premise that "the leadership of the Arabian Gulf nation of Qatar sees education as the key to Qatar's economic and social progress."[601] As the report continues to note, long-standing beliefs that the existing educational structures were not up to the task of providing a 21st century education motivated the changes. RAND came in, examined existing educational structures and in keeping with local values proposed various options for reform. Presented with this choice Hamad Bin Khalifah and Moza Bint Nasser chose the most extreme option involving "system wide structural change."[602] Such profound changes in education are a key part of the Qatar National Vision 2030, a clear articulation of

[598] "Qatar's Culture Queen," *The Economist* 31 May 2012.
[599] Jessica Holland, "Qatari Royal Family Sponsors Damien Hirst Retrospective at Tate Modern," *The National* 5 April 2012.
[600] See Gail L. Zellman et al., "Implementation of the K-12 Education Reform in Qatar's Schools," in *RAND Qatar Policy Institute* (Santa Monica; CA: RAND, 2009).
Gail L. Zellman et al., "Education for a New Era: Design and Implementation of K-12 Education Reform in Qatar,"ibid. (2007).
[601] Gail L. Zellman et al., "Implementation of the K-12 Education Reform in Qatar's Schools,"ibid. (2009), p.iii.
[602] Ibid.

the goals that Qatar is striving to attain, which underpin much of the economic diversification inherent in the work of Moza Bint Nasser's Qatar Foundation.[603]

RAND also contributed to an overhaul of practices at Qatar University but it is Qatar's other higher education policies that are more noteworthy.[604] Starting in 1998 with Virginia Commonwealth University followed by Weill Cornell Medical College in 2002, Texas A&M University in 2003, Carnegie Mellon University in 2004, Georgetown School of Foreign Service in 2005, Northwestern University in 2008, and University College London (UCL) in 2012, leading foreign higher educational institutions were established in the Education City project in the north of Doha. Degrees are now available in a range of subjects at undergraduate and at Master's level. HEC Paris also offers professional MBAs also under the QF umbrella.

Sheikha Moza who is also a UNESCO Special Envoy for Basic and Higher Education, frequently describes education as of central importance whether externally as a "tool for peace" or internationally to boost dialogue and mutual understanding, while a Qatar-based Ambassador described education in Qatar as undertaking a "silent revolution."[605] Yet some Qataris are fearful of the implications of these new educational programmes, which has led to a backlash against Education City. Interviews reveal a certain amount of animosity or at least some discomfort with practices and curricula at the institutions. The mixed teaching and socialising in Education City, for example, were highlighted by some Qatari students as a source of controversy.[606] Equally the sheer cost of the initiative infuriates others with many believing that Qatar University does not receive its fair share. Such complaints have frequently spilled out into the Arabic and English press in Doha, with comparisons between the lavish graduating ceremonies in Education City and the more demure counterparts at Qatar University being drawn as symptomatic of disparities in spending.[607] To some degree, these complaints are unfair. Qatar University has all the funding it wants; departments are

[603] "Qatar National Vision 2030," (Doha, Qatar: General Secreteriat for Development Planning, July 2008).
[604] Joy S. Moini et al., "The Reform of Qatar University," (Santa Monica; CA: RAND, 2009).
[605] "Frost over the World: Hh Sheikha Mozah," *Al Jazeera*(19 January 2010)
Personal Interview: Qatar-Based South American Ambassador, 21 March 2010.
[606] Personal Interview: Qatar-Based Focus Group, 25 March 2010.
[607] "Qatar Varsity Students Vent Ire on Twitter," *The Peninsula* 17 May 2012.

only constrained by issues of space and procurement and not cost.[608] While Education City is full of beautiful, state-of-the-art campuses and much of Qatar University is located in 1980s buildings, which inevitably leads to unfortunate comparisons, the women's campus in particular at Qatar University is growing significantly with huge construction projects and impressive facilities.

Nevertheless, the elite are aware of the growing concerns. 2012 saw an edict from Sheikha Moza changing the language of instruction in key courses at Qatar University from English to Arabic (for example, in International Studies and Management). This decision was taken with no discussion with the management of Qatar University and goes directly against the Qatar National Vision 2030 in that it limits Qatar University's ability to produce English-educated Qataris for the future work-force in Qatar, which will increasingly demand English speaking, reading, and writing abilities as a core skill.

Part of the motivation for this is to make it easier for Qataris to enter Qatar University who did not make the English-language proficiency levels. Though this decision will inevitably lower the standards (in addition to weaker students filling courses there simply are not enough suitably qualified Arabic-speaking lecturers and Professors) this will sate some of the societal criticism that the Qatari elite is too focused on supporting the foreign educational establishments.

### Domestic

One of the central tactical reasons as to why MICE industries have been so rigorously pursued as a key policy by the new Qatari elite is that they are expected to form a plinth of Qatar's future post-hydrocarbon economy. A desire to counter post-oil and gas economic concerns is not new; economic diversification has been a goal enunciated by Gulf elites since the 1960s. However, the reality of these drives is almost universally meagre. Only in Bahrain is there some success and there it is because Bahrain ran out of its hydrocarbon resources first. Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar have no such immediate pressure and thus consistently dodge the difficult decisions that need to be made.

[608] Personal Interview: Qatar University Lecturer 05 November 2012.

Large vanity projects are no strangers to the Gulf region and the power of individuals in Qatar is significant so hosting these events could be the result of a Sheikh's (or a Sheikha's) whimsical desire to 'play host.' However, the large sums involved and the thought-out rhetoric and plans behind the various policies suggest that they are actually attempts at economic diversification.

Part of the way that the MICE Industries are expected to contribute towards economic diversification is through job creation. Values and expectations that have been established in recent decades mean Qataris will not engage in menial or labour intensive work in the near future. Clerical industries, however, offers potential for Qataris in which to work; a prosaic but salient point. Similarly, one Qatar-based Ambassador noted that the focus on clerical and (certain) hospitality-based jobs are more suitable in the Qatari context for women.[609]

Some of this inspiration to bolster Qatar's domestic economy and future-proof it comes from following examples from abroad. Singapore in particular is known to have been used as something of a model for Qatar, particularly in the economic realm with its prominence and prosperity despite a relative dearth of domestic resources.[610]

Aside from inspiration taken from successful city-states around the world, the decision taken by QF to build the QNCC and the Tourism Authority to construct its own separate world-class conference centre highlights the importance of personal politics. Qatari society in a business context is beset with 'Chinese walls' between fiefdoms. Sheikha Moza Bint Nasser and her Qatar Foundation and Hamad Bin Jassem with his diverse interests in business including the Tourism Authority are two significant entities in Qatar where there is often little crossover. This difference will be personified in their two conference centres, which in any other country as small as Qatar would be an absurd duplication of resources. While this may turn out to be the case in Qatar too, the fiefdoms have differing goals and targets with the QF being increasingly focused on social and education projects. Thus while personal politics may militate against the sharing of one convention centre, if these entities

[609] Personal Interview: Qatar-Based European Ambassador, 03 March 2010.
[610] "Qatar Looks East to Singapore as a Model for Security and Economic Development," in *Cablegate* (Doha, Qatar: Wikileaks, 17 December 2007).

can specialise enough in their own sectors, given that both Moza Bint Nasser and Hamad Bin Jassem have deep pockets, each can pursue MICE Industries tailored to their own focus. Indeed, in yet another context, Qatar's fiscal strength is manifestly a key aspect facilitating the pursuit of these goals.

Equally with Qatar's sporting aspirations, gas-fuelled growth was essential in allowing these policies to be pursued with such expensive vigour. Extensive interviews in Doha with former and current Ambassadors to Qatar, senior advisors to members of the elite, academics, and those working specifically in the sporting field highlight the importance of individuals in Qatar's engagement with sport.[611] The fact that the Emir and the Crown Prince are sport fanatics is – as benign as it may sound – a central reason as to why Qatar has become such a hub for sport.

While members of the elite may want to host sporting events because of their own personal desire to see such events in Qatar, there are a number of corollaries that benefit the wider nation. Using sport to bolster a national identity is much discussed trope in the literature and has been applied to case studies from Northern Ireland to Hungary.[612] In the Qatari case too where there is a relative lack of 'uniqueness,' particularly in relation to similar and nearby city-states like Dubai and Abu Dhabi, sport is part of the emerging tapestry giving Qatar its own unique character. Indeed, in the UNESCO-published *International Social Sciences Journal*, Geoffrey Caldwell notes that "sporting success in international sport [can be used] as an internal and external validation of that system's worth…[a] drive for international sporting success maybe a testament to the insecurity of a country's identity.[613] Such a conceptualisation fits well to the Qatari example. Not only is the Emir using sport "as

[611] Roberts.
Personal Interview: Qatar-Based European Ambassador, 07 March 2010.
Personal Interview: Qatar-Based European Diplomat, 16 March 2010.
Personal Interview: Qatari Government Advisor, 22 October 2012.
Personal Interview: Qatar-Based European Ambassador, 18 March 2013.
Regan Doherty, "Qatar Bets on Future as Sports Mecca," *Reuters*(07 September 2011)
[612] Alan Bairner, "Political Unionism and Sporting Nationalism," *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 10, no. 4 (2003).
Tamas Doczi, "Golf Fever (?): Sport and National Identity - the Hungarian Case," *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 47(February 2011).
For a wider examination of this topic see Alan Tomlinson and Christopher Young, *National Identity and Global Sports Events: Culture, Politics, and Spectacle* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2006).
[613] Geoffrey Caldwell, "International Sport and National Identity," *International Social Science Journal* XXXIV, no. 2 (1982): p.182-3.

the vehicle par excellence" for the promotion of his leadership, but by virtue of the world class sporting events that Qatar is hosting, he is endowing Qatar with a global status as compared to Qatar's previous almost complete lack of a status on the international stage.[614]

Aside from the issue of national identity (more of which will be discussed in the regional and international sections below) providing sporting spectacles as well as a vast increase in sporting facilities for Qataris is a domestically popular move. One former Ambassador noted that Hamad Bin Khalifah's use of sport by constructing facilities was one of the key ways in the 1980s that he increased his popularity in Qatar.[615] Similarly it was interesting to note that on winning the right to host the 2022 World Cup the Emir took a slow procession down the Corniche in Doha amid celebrating Qataris of all generations explicitly linking himself with the remarkable Qatari victory.

The vast increase of sport on the Qatari calendar is of potentially critical importance given the epidemic levels of obesity in the country. The World Health Organisation says that 74 per cent of Qatari men and 70 per cent of Qatari woman are overweight, with other surveys suggesting that nearly 50 per cent of adults and 33 per cent of children are obese.[616] Qatar-based health experts have even suggested that by 2015 73 per cent of woman and 69 per cent of men may be clinically obese.[617] 'National Sports Day' – a mandated national holiday – was inaugurated in 2012 by the Crown Prince to encourage Qataris to undertake exercise. Whatever professional-level sport can do to encourage Qatar's increasingly fat youth in particular to take up a sport is a good thing, especially if the burgeoning epidemic of type-2 diabetes incapacitates increasing numbers of Qataris when there are so few of them in the first place to staff the Qatari economy. Many of these ideas referring specifically to the sporting benefits for Qataris themselves and Qatar more generally are contained in the Qatar Olympic Committee Strategic Plan.[618]

[614] Amara, "2006 Qatar Asian Games: A 'Modernization' Project from Above?," p.503.
[615] Personal Interview: Former Ambassador to Qatar.
[616] Connor Bell, "Obesity: A Big Problem for Fast Growing Qatar," *Al Jazeera*(25 July 2012)
Haley Sweetland Edwards, "The Richest, Fattest Nation on Earth (It's Not the United States)," *The Atlantic*(16 November 2011)
[617] Michael Slackman, "Privilege Pulls Qatar Towards Unhealthy Choices," *The New York Times* 26 April 2010.
[618] "Sports Sector Strategy (2011-2016)," (Doha, Qatar: Qatar Olympic Committe, July 2011).

Nonneman's framework dictates that for domestic determinants of foreign policy one must consider 'domestic survival' as a key instigator of policy. While one cannot link sport or art purchases to concerns of an existential nature, one must consider these cultural gambits as a part of wider policies with wider aims that contribute to assuaging Qatar's core security concerns albeit in tangential ways.

Many of these cultural policies are a key part of a desire to differentiate Qatar as a unique and unusual country engaged in overtly developmentary actions. While there are reasons to do this vis-à-vis an international and a regional audience, so too it is important to burnish and carve out a clear, positive, and unique image – or brand – of Qatar for Qataris.

With a limited history on which to draw and surrounded by other states with overwhelmingly similar identities, Qatar needs to carve a niche for itself. Moreover, creating a distinct, attractive brand around Qatar – otherwise known as place or country branding – is all the more important given the wider context of the general thrust of globalisation.

> Today...national boundaries are under siege at myriad of levels – from civil wars and economic transnationalization, from cultural exclusivity and religious revivals, and from political disillusion and institutional decay (and reinvention).[619]

Gulf States are particularly vulnerable to the homogenising powers of globalisation as they are, in the language of Cerny, archetypal 'postmodern' states. His theory revolves around the emergence of so-called 'competition states' by which he is referring to states that are so actively seeking to augment their business credentials and business ties throughout the world (as Qatar certainly is doing) that "today's state constitutes the main agency of the process of globalization." States undertake this push for economic gain and to remain relevant to their people, Cerny continues. Yet by seeking to relentlessly attract a variety of economic activity to the state in order to fulfil the needs of domestic constituents, states foist a paradox upon themselves in that by undertaking such business-savvy, business-attracting actions this very processes "hinders the capacity of state institutions to embody the kind of communal solidarity or *Gemeinschaft* which gave the modern nation-state its

[619] Philip G Cerny, "Paradoxes of the Competition State: The Dynamics of Political Globalization," *Government and Opposition* 32, no. 2 (April 1997): p.252.

deeper legitimacy, institutionalised power, and social embeddedness."[620] This is where state branding is so critical.

Against this doubly homogenising backdrop branding in the domestic context is crucial for a state to maintain a sense of individuality. The domestic importance of country branding is well noted in the literature; Van Ham for one notes that "internally, they [states] are making their citizens feel better and more confident about themselves by giving them both power and identity."[621]

The pressing need to establish a unique brand for Qatar for Qataris themselves to latch on to is, therefore, evident. Mediation and sport - as already mentioned - contribute towards the Qatari brand as do the various cultural initiatives.

At this point the discussion inevitably turns to Benedict Anderson, one of the most influential authors on the topic of nationalism and its origins in the post-colonial world. He argues that nations are 'imagined' communities:

> It is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion...Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.[622]

Along with a census and a map, museums form the third spoke of the key "agencies for culturing 'the public' and for 'thinking' nation-states" as Macdonald puts it.[623] Macdonald also notes that not all museums "were an expressive site and agency of some of these new ways of thinking and of public culturing" nor is this role limited to museums with other public institutions playing a role in fostering and inculcating new norms of identity.[624]

In Qatar's case the art museums established by the new elite along with the film festival and the cultural village hub of Katara, which hosts numerous art galleries and small museums not to mention a huge open-air amphitheatre, which hosts visiting theatre and opera, are a

[620] Ibid., p.251. Quoted in Van Ham, "Place Branding: The State of the Art," p.6.
[621] "Place Branding: The State of the Art," p.6.
[622] Bendict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 2006 (revised edition) ), p.6-7.
[623] Sharon J Macdonald, "Museums, National, Postnational and Transcultural Identities," *Museum and Society* 1, no. 1 (2003): p.2.
[624] Ibid.

part of establishing, inculcating, and propagating a worldly, culturally-sophisticated, and internationally-orientated brand. The national museum will not open until 2015 but it is not crucial from Anderson's perspective that the museums are full of national artefacts charting the nation's history.

> The idea of 'having a culture' has become crucial to nationalise and politicised ethnic discourse: it is taken as a mark of being a *bona fide* 'people' who should also have rights of at least some degree of self-governance…For nations, culture is their means of such expression: it is the outward sign of distinctive 'inner depths'.
>
> This did not necessarily mean that all that was on show had necessarily to be 'of the nation, though 'national' artefacts and art works were an important strand. Just 'having a museum' was itself a performative utterance of having an identity.[625]

By expending so much time and treasure on explicitly fostering and advertising the fact that Qatar 'has a culture,' Qatar is asserting its legitimacy as a *bona fide* nation.[626] JE Peterson sees this assertion of legitimacy – stemming not only from cultural heritage but from Qatar's brand creation as a whole – as assuring "the legitimacy of the micro-state…[which] in turn leads to the single most important factor: increased awareness of and legitimacy accruing to Qatar – in domestic and external terms – enhances [sic] the prospects for the state's survival."[627]

Both the tactical use of culture to augment the Qatari brand and the strategic use of a brand are resolutely elite-led ventures. In particular it is Al Mayassa Bint Hamad who is personally in charge of museums, art, and cinema initiatives in Qatar as the public figurehead and the Chair of the Qatar Museums Authority, the Doha Film Institute, and various other cultural and charitable organisations.

As Nonneman notes, the policy making elite are of particular relevance in the Middle East for often they have unusual sway and freedom of action. This is particularly true of Qatar as a small country with a small native population that has been historically dominated by the

[625] Ibid., p.2-3.
[626] This is not meant to be a value judgement but a practical assessment. Simply put Qatar just does not have a long history from which the typical tangible evidence of long-term civilisation remains (i.e. documents, pottery, ancient cities, etc.). This discrepancy is all the more stark when compared to the nearby Persian civilization, Bahrain (or Dilmun as part of it was known), Oman, or Saudi Arabia's two holy sites of Mecca and Medina.
[627] Peterson, "Qatar and the World: Branding for a Micro-State," p.748.

ruling family. It is plausible, therefore, to suggest that the personal whims and desires of one of the most important Al Thanis may be enacted on a state level and that they may use their power, influence, and financial might to pursue personal policies on the larger political scale. It should be noted that this is potentially all the more true with ethereal policy spheres such as art and culture where there is more room for personal subjectivity to play a part. Indeed, The Economist intoned a haughty warning to Al Mayassa Bint Hamad noting that she would have to make sure that "to be more than a rich girl's plaything" the Museum's Authority under her leadership would have to "do better than put expensive foreign baubles on display in her homeland."[628]

However, Al Mayassa Bint Hamad firmly seeks to couch the various cultural initiatives within a much wider thrust of Qatari policy. Her speeches and remarks on the reasons as to why she is emerging as such a leading figure in the art world and so assiduous a promoter of an array of other cultural activities in Qatar fit the strategic thrust of many Qatari policies. For example, in her speech at the TEDx Forum explaining her rationale behind the cultural policies and museums that she oversees, Al Mayassa discusses the place of culture and art acting as a tool to smooth the transition between the globalized, homogenising world and the domestic necessities of retaining a sense of identity. Indeed, she favourably quotes Richard Wilk and his notion of 'globalizing the local and localizing the global.'[629] Al Mayassa also notes that there is a certain "security" in having a local identity; an interesting turn of phrase that harks to challenges that Qatar faces establishing its sense of self and the important role that her cultural projects play therein. Echoing Macdonald she notes that "art becomes a very important part of our national identity…social and political impact of an artist on his nation's development of cultural developing is very important."

In addition, the personal role of Moza Bint Nasser, the Emir's consort, in the pursuit of improving Qatar's education standards cannot be overestimated. There is little doubt that without her personal desire, prominent position, and sheer force of will RAND would not have undertaken their key initial evaluation of Qatar's education system and their subsequent overhaul. In the same way only someone as powerful as Sheikha Moza Bint

[628] "Qatar's Culture Queen."
[629] TED Talks, "Sheikha Al Mayassa: Globlizing the Local, Localizing the Global," in *TED Talks Director* (YouTube, 08 February 2012).

Nasser could have secured the billions of dollars of funding that was required to establish so many foreign universities in Education City in Doha.

## Regional

There are many facets and levels of regional competition. States can compete in the cultural, political, economic, or sporting arenas and they can do this for reasons including those stemming from personal elite rivalries, the need to establish a competitive edge, or the need to carve a niche vis-à-vis regional competitors. All of these concerns and drivers are manifest to some degree in Qatar's decisions to vigorously pursue its various 'softer' policies as a part of an overall strategy to establish a new brand for the country.

At the core of these accentuated regional rivalries, as noted already, lies the issue of the homogeneity of the Gulf States. For the majority of history on the Arabian Peninsula there have not been clearly demarcated dividing lines between tribal-political entities as Brauer notes.

> [I]t is not unjust to conclude that [medieval Muslim] geographers…recognized the existence of political boundaries in the sense that as one progressed in a direction away from the centre of a state, one would sooner or later pass from one sovereignty to another or that one's taxes would flow to different places on either side of such a division. Yet, clearly in the minds of these cartographers such boundaries were constituted not as sharply defined boundary lines but rather as transition zones of uncertain sovereignty between two states.[630]

Historically resonant borders, for example as demarcated by a river or a mountain range, are but one way that a community can begin to coalesce against another community across the dividing line. The Arabian Peninsula is largely without such physical features particularly in the case of Qatar, the UAE, and Kuwait. This is not fatal to nationhood-forming, but makes it more difficult, particularly in a context where roaming, tribal dynamics have been a way of life.

Aside from endowing states with specific issues, such as with the Bidoon in Kuwait or the Al Murrah in Qatar, with pressure to establish a border where previously none existed there

[630] Ralph W. Brauer, "Boundaries and Frontiers in Medieval Muslim Geography," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 85, no. 6 (1995): p.5.

needs to be a reason to separate state A from state B.[631] But this is difficult when the religion, culture, political dynamics, social milieu, familial links, histories, economic practice, and tribal structures are all similar. Needless to say there are differences such as between port cities and those further inland or the settled (*hadar)* and the roaming (*bedouin*) peoples. Yet, overall, there are more features of commonality than difference.

One area where there are distinctions to be made is in terms of the ruling elites. That Kuwait is synonymous with the Al Sabah and Qatar with the Al Thani is part of each state's drive to differentiate itself. Yet the tribal dynamic cuts both ways as Wilkinson notes.

> Even today the formal state divisions, which are largely the heritage of the British presence, are still permeated by tribal, clan and family relations, whilst membership and affiliation to commercial, linguistic, religious and ethnic groupings and networks cut across borders and are often still of greater significance than state citizenship.[632]

The tribe is a competitor for loyalty to the state and its links span the region. Tribes and families are spread throughout the GCC; there are Al Rumaihis, Al Najjars, and Al Ghanims, in each Gulf State.[633] Moreover, the tribe is a unit that has been commanding some form of loyalty for hundreds of years; these new states have barely passed a few generations yet seek to demand the ultimate loyalty of its people over the tribe. This is a difficult sell and one that needs to be explicitly worked upon.

Equally in the Gulf Islam is a pan-state phenomenon that demands devotion and is, in this context, in some kind of rivalry to the state for loyalty. The story of Islam is embedded in the DNA of the Arabian Peninsula and has a deep history that is used to maintain loyalty. It is a significant challenge to any state; let alone to newly emerging states. Making this concern all the more acute for Gulf States is the fact that their large neighbour Saudi Arabia is the

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[631] The Bidoon issue in Kuwait is complex and cannot be solely reduced down to an issues of emerging borders, but this factor did play a central role in creating this issue.
In the Qatari context it is the Al Murrah tribe that has been the source of numerous problems. A tribe that traditionally but today uncomfortably straddles the border between the two states, Saudi Arabian Al Murrah were accused of backing an alleged Saudi counter coup attempt in Qatar in 1996. Arrested, sentenced to death but never executed, they were released in 2010 and flew immediately to Saudi Arabia for an audience with King Abdullah.
Habib Toumi, "Saudi Prisoners Release from Qatar Jail Eases Relations," *Gulf News*(27 May 2010)
[632] Papadopoulos and Heslop, "Country Equity and Country Branding: Problems and Prospects," p.29.
[633] For various examples of this see Field, *The Merchants: The Big Business Families of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States*.

central state in Islam. It not only dominates the region by virtue of its sheer size but because of its long-established, religiously-based credentials; something that the other Gulf States find it difficult with which to compete.

In short, the history of the specific region in terms of its geography, people, and society provide two interrelated problems for a modern state. Firstly, a pervasive homogeneity means that each state must fight vigorously if it wants to differentiate itself and vie for recognition. Secondly, the history of the region provides several strong competitors for the loyalty of the people with Islam (personified in the state of Saudi Arabia), tribal, and pan-Arab dynamics all having differing degrees of influence on a citizen's loyalty. The MICE Industry as well as sporting and cultural endeavours are a part of Qatar's tactical answers to these strategic issues.

As Peterson rightly notes, "Few countries have taken the lessons and importance of branding to heart more thoroughly than Qatar has in recent years."[634] Peterson discusses the importance of hosting key events such as the WTO 'Doha Round' in November 2001, the Organization of Islamic Conference summit in March 2003, and the Second South Summit of the Group of 77 in June 2005. He also notes the importance of sports in contributing to Qatar's emerging brand. Top tennis and golf tournaments alongside hosting major events like the Asian Games in 2006 and the Asian Cup in 2011 lead the way. Obviously securing the hosting of Qatar 2022 FIFA World Cup is the crowning jewel in this arsenal and is arguably the single most prominent act that Qatar has undertaken in terms of publicising its brand.

The sport and MICE Industry examples contribute to significantly if not exponentially boosting Qatar's brand recognition world-wide. There are several key benefits to this. Boosted recognition is critical to competing for greater Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). The literature discusses at length the recent growth in place branding in the context of obtaining greater FDI.[635] The personal context, for example, is crucial.

> It [is] clear that the decision maker's personal views of target countries, and related influences from personal contacts with competitors, customers, suppliers, distributors, and others, play a pivotal role in the target country selections....research has found that the images that executives hold of various

[634] Peterson, "Qatar and the World: Branding for a Micro-State," p.746.
[635] See Papadopoulos and Heslop, "Country Equity and Country Branding: Problems and Prospects."

> countries are significantly different from objective descriptors of these countries, and yet influences their actions.[636]

The authors continue to quote a study of American business leaders relying on their perceptions of countries in South East Asia in terms of their decision to invest there or not, while another long-term study found that "subjective considerations by executives involved play a major role in investment decisions."[637] With personal impressions being so important, Qatar's explicit focus on the luxury tourism sector and lavish MICE Industry events - whisking delegates from Business Class travel with Qatar Airways to a luxury five star hotel, and then on to world-class conference buildings - is arguably a savvy business-orientated policy, though questions remain about the cost-benefit analysis. Similarly, by getting Qatar known as a state that actively supports leading sports and cultural events, it is endeavouring to create an attractive and familiar image for the country.

The boost to Qatar's international profile that sporting and MICE events bring is frequently commented upon, as one sports media professional put it: "[Qatar] is putting itself on the map…Its hosting of major sporting events is also a significant endorsement of a country's emergence, its credibility, its infrastructure and of it being a destination in its own right.[638] Academic sources too echo this thrust with Campbell referring to Qatar carving "a global niche through hosting world sporting events."[639] Amara sees Qatar's various sporting ventures as a way to 'modernise through sport' and a way to assure national prestige through sporting success.[640] Equally, through textual analysis of statements from official Qatari organs including the Crown Prince's office, he suggests that it can be used "externally for establishing Qatar as a leading country, and thus not a periphery of Saudi Arabia."[641] On a personal basis it was interesting to note the difference between Qatar in 2007 and Qatar in 2012. On leaving for Doha few friends in the UK knew of Qatar in 2007 but when returning in late 2009, Qatar was suddenly 'that place England played Brazil [at football]' where as today Qatar is most certainly 'that place that will host the World Cup in 2022.'

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[636] Ibid., p.304.
[637] Ibid.
[638] Elizabeth Bains, "Qatar's Quest for Sporting Glory," *MEED Middle East Economic Digest* 12 June 2009.
[639] Rook Campbell, "Staging Globalization for National Projects: Global Sport Markets and Elite Athletic Transnational Labour in Qatar," *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 46, no. 45 (July 2010): p.49.
[640] Amara, "2006 Qatar Asian Games: A 'Modernization' Project from Above?," p.503-4.
[641] Ibid., p.506.

As well as a savvy strategy to foster a place for Qatar as a destination with unique attractions, it is impossible to ignore the regional elite competition, which can play out in different ways. In terms of the tourism industry Dubai has gone for a mass-market tourism appeal while Qatar prefers to concentrate on the high-spending MICE visitors. The former acting Director General of the Qatar Tourism Authority, Jan Poul De Boer, is quoted in a US Embassy cable explicitly discussing Qatar's strategy in opposition to a 'Dubai strategy.' Instead of the mass-market approach, Qatar pursued "a niche market for educational, medical, and sports tourism along with the existing meetings, incentives, conventions and expo travellers market."[642] Such a repudiation of Dubai's strategy stems not only from a rejection of the fundamental model, but from the sensitivities of Qatar's leadership over concerns of overt westernisation.[643]

Equally, the states are too rich to be concerned with the costs of duplication. Instead they can be driven by deep often personal elite-to-elite desires to compete. The duplication of cultural and educational strategies in Abu Dhabi and Doha (the Sorbonne, New York University and the Guggenheim versus Education City, Tribeca, the Museum of Islamic Art (MIA)) is informed by the regional context and of regional competition. Certainly, each fits into wider domestic strategies but though impossible to quantify, one cannot ignore the country-to-country, elite-to-elite question of rivalry and competition.

## International

In terms of the international sphere the key determinants of importance refer to deep, systemic changes in the international system that have diluted the grip of traditional states on the levers of the world economy. In her seminal article in *Foreign Affairs* Matthews described this in terms of an issue of relative decline.

> The most powerful engine of change in the relative decline of states and the rise of non-state actors is the computer and telecommunications revolution...Widely accessible and affordable technology has broken governments' monopoly on the collection and management of large amounts of information and deprived governments of the deference they enjoyed because of it. In every sphere of activity,

[642] "Subject: Qatar Establishng a Tourism Niche," in *Cablegate* (Doha, Qatar: Wikileaks, 26/02/2007).
[643] "Jan Poul De Boer Qatar Is Not Another Dubai," *Travel Daily News*(20 Ocotber 2007)
Benjamin Barthe, "Gloom Grips Qatar's Arab Riviera after Alcohol Ban," *The Guardian*(21 February 2012)

> instantaneous access to information and the ability to put it to use multiplies the number of players who matter and reduces the number who command great authority.[644]

Writings like this particularly in the 1990s discussing how globalization will 'erode national boundaries' were vogue for a time and while the rhetoric can go too far, few would deny that what one may describe as globalisation has diluted the reach and power of states.[645] Moreover, for a small state seeking to emerge in its own right in the early 1990s under a new leadership with a fundamentally different idea of how to conceptualise the Qatari state, these new challenges were doubly as daunting.

One potential answer to this conundrum is with the post-modern conception of state branding. Specifically in terms of globalization in a branding context, along the lines of Cerny as noted earlier, Olins discusses the internationalisation of commerce, while having numerous positive impacts, has also resulted in "a very harsh and turbulent commercial environment [where] The nation that makes itself the most attractive wins the prizes – others suffer."[646] Van Ham continues on this theme:

> Globalization and the harmonizing effects of European integration put further pressures on territorial entities to develop, manage, and leverage their brand equity. To stand out from the crowd and capture significant mind share and market share, place branding has become essential.
>
> ...
>
> One has to recognise that the unbranded state has a difficult time attracting economic and political attention. Why would we invest in or visit a country we do now know, and why would we pay attention to its political and strategic demands if we have no clue what the country is all about and why we should care.[647]

For Van Ham's concerns with the 'harmonizing effects of European integration' read in the Qatari context – as dealt with above – the issues stemming from regional homogeneity. Yet Van Ham elevates these concerns to the international level.

> Nation branding is currently justified among state and corporate actors as a necessary corrective to the waning importance of the nation-state in the context of globalized economic, political, and

[644] Jessica T Matthews, "Power Shifts," *Foreign Affairs* 76, no. 1 (January/February 1997): p.51.
[645] Anne-Marie Slaughter, "The Real New World Order," ibid., no. 5 (1997): p.192.
[646] Olins, "Branding the Nation - the Historical Context," p.246.
[647] Van Ham, "Place Branding: The State of the Art," p.4, 6.

> cultural exchange. Nationally imagined identity is compromised by a number of indigenous and exogenous factors: the spectre of cultural homogeneity or, conversely, hyper-hybridity; stronger allegiances at the subnational, supranational or transnational levels...and widening networks of mobility, media and migration. In this context, corporate branding is a demonstrably effective way to assign unique identification by conscious highlighting certain meanings and myths while ignoring others. It is increasingly adopted by governments as a means to promote national identity while encouraging the economic benefits necessary to compete in a modern globalized world.[648]

Qatar's MICE Industries along with the explicit promotion of sport and Qatar's cultural ambitions are key plinths in Qatar's emerging state brand. They have the publicity element, crucial to branding and carry positive, new, trans-cultural messages attesting to Qatar's modern appeal. Indeed, another way to conceive of the international sphere is in terms of Qatar's evident desire to join the mainstream, international consensus. By hosting sporting and other key events, Qatar is asserting its right and its legitimacy to act as a traditional state; a small point but one worth making considering Qatar's backdrop against overarching Saudi power and concerns as to its independence. But in a wider sense one can also see "the Asian Games as an opportunity for Qatar to reiterate its adherence to the universal values of democracy, solidarity and human rights."[649]

Qatar's brand is ranged against regional competition and at the international realm as both an economic lure, a way to establish Qatar as a true member of the international community, and to publicise Qatar as a dynamic country of modern values through the levelling medium of international sport and by persuading if not paying people to come to Doha to find out about the country themselves.

In the educational sphere there are further tactical issues in the international level. Originally in the plan for Education City it was assumed that the venture would be populated by British universities given the historic Anglo-Qatari relations.[650] Yet no British university could be persuaded to engage with the venture leaving the Qataris to turn to America where there was no shortage of candidates. The fact that Qatar now has US institutions at

[648] Melissa Aronczyk, ""Living the Brand": Nationality, Globality and the Idientity Strategies of Nation Branding Consultants," *International Journal of Communication* 2(2008): p.43.
[649] Amara summing up some of the repeated goals of states Qatari desirable outcomes for the 2006 Games. Amara, "2006 Qatar Asian Games: A 'Modernization' Project from Above?," p.507.
[650] Personal Interview: Former Ambassador to Qatar.

the heart of its society is a significant factor intimately tying America to Qatar and sends a deep signal to America and the world of Qatar's intentions. It implicitly shows that Qatar's orientation is towards a Western-centric curriculum, pedagogy, and ethos situating Qatar firmly on a path Western states can understand and of which they approve; a potentially important point given the depth of misunderstanding and mistrust that has consumed Western-Arab and Muslim relations since 11 September 2001.

Overall, the central driving goal of these branding policies with their cultural, sporting, educational and business-orientated facets is to contribute to diversifying Qatar's economy and facilitating the transition to a post-hydrocarbon economy, which will depend upon skills that a traditional Gulf education system does not provide (professional use of the English language, analysis and critical thinking skills, etc.). Such concerns are at the heart of the Qatar National Vision 2030 and the educational thrust post-1995. While one can *prima facie* recognise the importance of developing such educational skills and business-related attributes and facilities, equally one can empirically point to their importance.

In their study on the importance of country branding, after much hypothesizing and subsequent testing, Kotler *et al* discern ten key concerns for companies that are searching for a new location for their business.

- Local labour market
- Access to customer and supplier markets
- Availability of development site facilities and infrastructure
- Transportation
- Education and training opportunities
- Quality of life
- Business climate
- Access to R&D facilities
- Capital availability

- Taxes and regulation [clarity][651]

If these issues are of interest to potential businesses by definition they are desired by existing businesses too. The brand that Qatar is so assiduously creating primarily though not exclusively through its cultural, sporting, MICE and educational projects speaks directly to several of these concerns. A suitable local labour market is referring to a local labour force suitably educated to work; the central goal of the Qatar Foundation. Further education and training opportunities and the creation of research and design location (Qatar Science and Technology Park (QSTP)) are also crucial to the Qatar Foundation's mission. Equally, concerns over quality of life and even a business climate improvement are answered to varying degrees by Qatar's cultural policies and by the MICE industry policies in Qatar.

In this way these cultural, sporting, and educational policies, far from being perennially relegated to the ethereal world of branding and popularity, can be seen as direct tactical answers to key business-related questions designed to make Qatar more viable an alternative for businesses.

[651] Kotler, Haider, and Rein, *Marketing Places: Attracting Investment, Industry, and Tourism to Cities, States, and Nations*, p.232. Quoted in Kotler and Gertner, "Country as Brand, Product, and Beyond: A Place Marketing and Brand Management Perspective," p.257.

## Gas Policies

Since the discovery of huge quantities of gas in the north of Qatar in 1971, there have been plans to export it. However, for decades these plans barely progressed as Qatar was not alone in seeing gas as at best a by-product in the search for oil and at worst an annoyance that had to be flared off.[652]

Before the discovery of what came to be known as the 'North Field,' initial plans to use the associated gas (that is, gas found with oil) for domestic power generation in 1960 foundered but similar projects were put forward subsequently, including mooted plans to ship LNG to Japan in the early 1970s.[653] The first natural gas liquefaction plant (NGL 1) came online in 1975, saving the automatic flaring of approximately 80 per cent of associated gas produced daily.[654] NGL 2, which came online in 1979, and a growing realisation of the waste of flaring meant that onshore flaring was reduced to 66 per cent of gas produced by 1974 and to under 5 per cent by the end of the decade.[655]

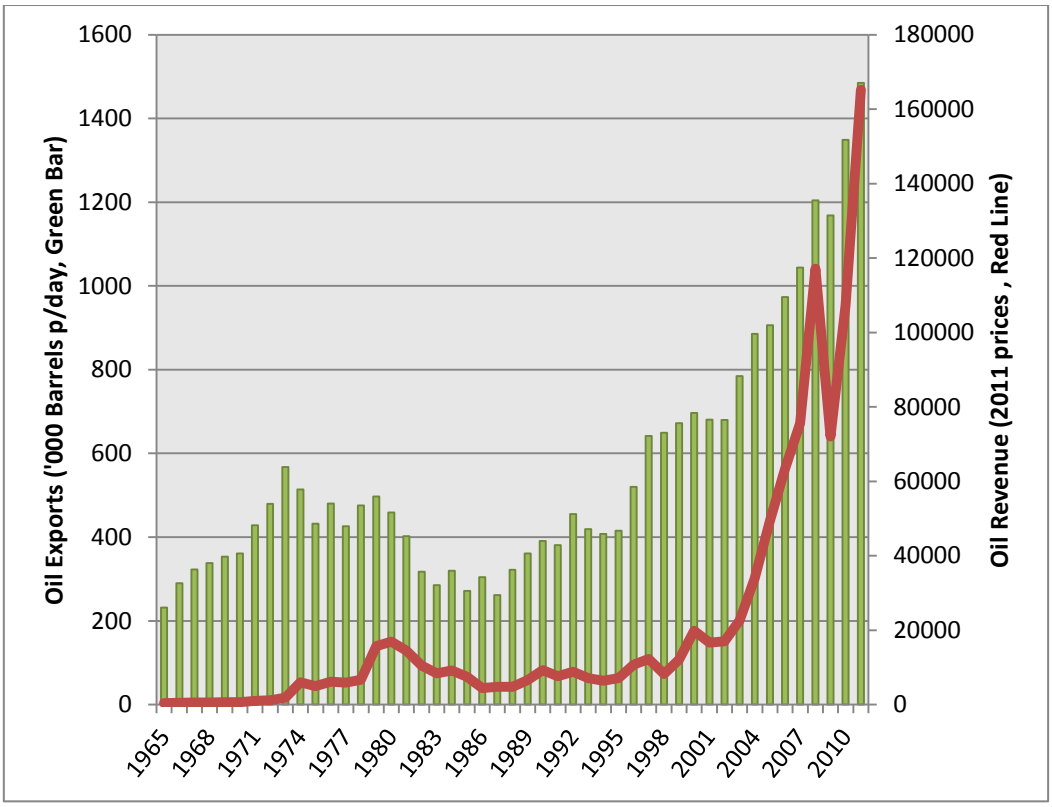
However, in April 1977 Qatar's newly built NGL 1 plant exploded in what was described at the time as the most expensive accident in the history of the gas industry worldwide.[656] It cost insurers $68 million, which in 2013 dollars is approximately $268 million. This event cast a pall over the industry in Qatar. Initially, it was questioned whether this incident would be used as a justification "to cut back rather than diversify" into gas.[657] Even though subsequently the plant was rebuilt, this incident added to existing reservations about the gas industry. Indeed, at the time of the discovery of the North Field few realised its potential and the overarching sentiment according to Abdullah Bin Hamad Al Attiyah, a close confidant of Crown Prince Hamad Bin Khalifah and the future long-term Minister of Industry

[652] Birnur Buzcu-Guven, Robert Harriss, and Donald Hertzmark, "Gas Flaring and Venting: Extent, Impacts, and Remedies," in *Energy Market Consequences of an Emerging US Carbon Management Policy* (Huston, TX: James A Baker III Institute for Public Policy, Rice University, September 2010), p.8.
For an example of unfulfilled early gas delivery ideas see "Liquid Gas Project," *Middle East Economic Digest* 19 March 1971.
[653] "Persian Gulf: Qatar: Use of Natural Gas," *Middle East Economic Digest* (2 November 1960).
"Japanese Participate in Lng Development," *Middle East Economic Digest* (31 January 1975).
[654] El Mallakh, *Qatar : Development of an Oil Economy*, p.38.
Dargin, "The Gas Revolution in Qatar," p.322.
[655] "The Gas Revolution in Qatar," p.322.
[656] John Whelan, "Qatar Fire," *Middle East Economic Digest* (15 April 1977).
[657] Ibid.

and Energy, was of 'disappointment' that it was a gas field and not an oil field despite its apparent size.[658]

While Qatar's oil was expected to run out by the end of the millennium, this was not an imminent enough concern to overturn the fixation on oil to the detriment of gas.[659] The oil price spike in the 1970s further insulated the oil industry and undercut the argument for diversification. Annually Qatar made $2 billion in 1975 from oil alone which rose to over $5 billion by 1980.[660]

***Figure 2: Qatar's Oil Exports & Oil Revenue***




*Source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2012*[661]

Despite the fact that scores of Japanese companies were seeking to invest in Qatar's gas resources in the 1970s, gas was still received with indifference.[662] These factors along with

[658] Quoted in Dargin, "The Gas Revolution in Qatar," p.322.
[659] El Mallakh, *Qatar : Development of an Oil Economy*, p.37.
[660] Hashimoto, Elass, and Eller, "Liquified Natural Gas from Qatar: The Qatargas Project," p.1.
[661] "Bp Statistical Review of World Energy," (London: British Petroleum (BP), June 2012).
[662] "Qatar: In Brief," *Middle East Economic Digest* (18 June 1976).

concerns as to global gas demand led diplomats based in Doha to suggest that the North Field would be left "until the late 1980s."[663]

As the 1980s progressed the oil price fell and Qatar endured a relatively difficult financial period sustaining successive budget deficits for the first time and financing the debt with external borrowing.[664] Lethargy, inaction, and institutional difficulties with decision-making characterised Qatari action in a difficult regional climate. Though the Qataris offered Shell, BP, and Total [then called CFP] 7.5 per cent equity stakes in a joint venture to exploit the North Field for LNG sales in 1982 and Total, BP and QGPC established Qatargas in 1984, the reality was that LNG sales were low down the priority list of the Qatari elite.[665]

Instead Phase one was to be the exploitation of the gas field for domestic Qatari use and Phase two was to position Qatar as a regional gas supplier with a network of pipes. The LNG plan was Phase three, which was half-heartily undertaken and no progress was made for a decade.

Phase 1 began in 1987 after several delays stemming from poor work quality and a hostile regional environment. Nevertheless, in 1991 on the twentieth anniversary of independence and of the field's discovery, production began on Qatar's North Field.[666]

Phase 2 concerned the creation of a regional gas grid. This plan was cheaper than engaging in the LNG industry and was the preferred choice in the 1980s.[667] Initial discussions occurred between GCC Oil Ministers in 1988. At the 1989 GCC Annual summit the idea of piping North Field gas to Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait, and Bahrain was approved and at the next year's summit the "GCC Nations agreed to nearly all the essentials for the regional pipeline, except the price."[668] However, this concept soon foundered as regional competition,

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"Gulf States: Q.P.C's Liquid Gas Project," *Middle East Economic Digest* (19 March 1971).

[663] John Whelan, "Qatar: Cutbacks in Spending Masks Big Chances for Contractors," ibid.(22 June 1978).

[664] Henry T. Azzam, *The Arab World Facing the Challenge of the New Millennium* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), p.192.

[665] Hashimoto, Elass, and Eller, "Liquified Natural Gas from Qatar: The Qatargas Project," p.11.

[666] Dargin, "The Gas Revolution in Qatar," p.327.
Hashimoto, Elass, and Eller, "Liquified Natural Gas from Qatar: The Qatargas Project," p.15.

[667] Dargin, "The Gas Revolution in Qatar," p.330.

[668] "The Dolphin Project: The Development of a Gulf Gas Initiative," (Oxford: Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, 2008), p.18.

rivalries, and war came to the fore. Grand plans for pipelines to Israel, India, and Pakistan rumbled on for several years before also being abandoned.[669]

As for Phase 3, non-prioritised progress was slow following the 1982 discussions between the state and international oil companies (IOC). In 1984 a Joint Venture Agreement exporting LNG to Japan was signed providing BP and Total a 7.5 per cent stake each in the Qatargas LNG plant.[670] However, Qatar's miserly demands on the IOCs slowed negotiation and made it almost uneconomical – "marginal" as one IOC executive put it[671] – while the escalating Iran-Iraq and Tanker war disincentivised the external parties.[672]

Nevertheless, amid growing LNG competition from South Korea and Taiwan entering the LNG market (on the demand side) in 1986 and 1990 respectively, there was pressure on Japan to secure long-term contracts. Japan's *Sogo Shosha* – general trading companies like Mitsubishi and Marubeni – that had been operating in Qatar for decades acted as "the glue" between the Japanese State, Japanese regional gas companies, and Qatar throughout negotiations in the late 1980s and 1990s.[673] Overall, the Japanese role in the development of Qatar's LNG was significant.

> In addition to Japanese end customers, Japanese *Sogo Shosha* brokering the deals, Japanese firms involved in the construction of the apparatus, the Japanese Government oversaw key financing. The Government-led Export-Import Bank of Japan (J-EXIM) provided the majority of the $3bn for the first LNG 'train' in Qatar along with other Japanese banks.[674]

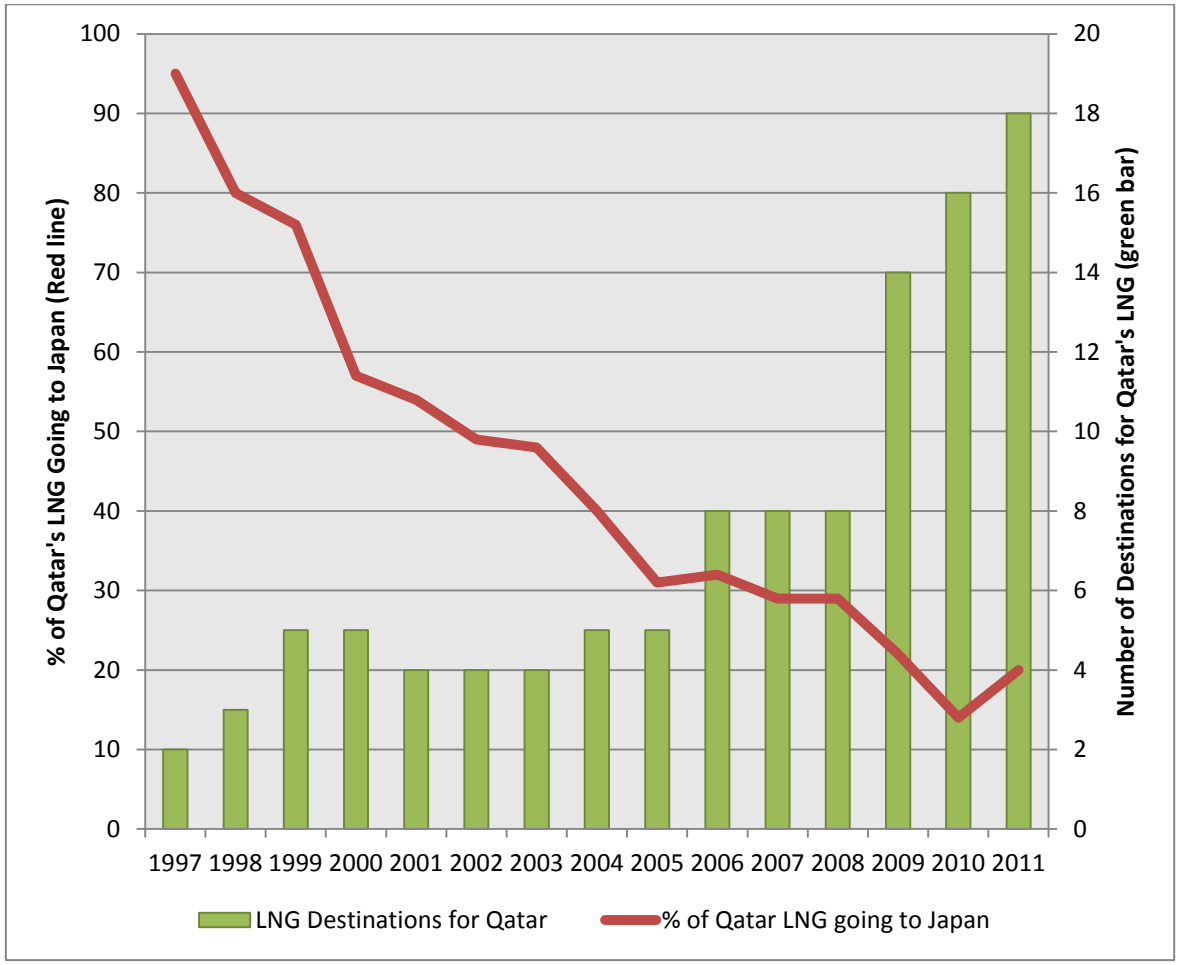
The Japanese persevered despite the Iran-Iraq War, the Tanker War, the invasion of Kuwait, the flight of skilled personnel from the Gulf, repeated infrastructure problems in Qatar, and BP pulling out in 1992 and being replaced by Mobil. Finally, in January 1997 Japan received its first LNG from Qatar.

In the first year of LNG exports Qatar only exported to two countries, Japan and Spain. Over 95 per cent of Qatar's LNG went to Japan in the first year though the percentage of LNG

[669] See ibid., p.28-31.
[670] Hashimoto, Elass, and Eller, "Liquified Natural Gas from Qatar: The Qatargas Project," p.20.
[671] Ibid., p.21.
[672] Ibid., p.2.
[673] Ibid., p.247.
[674] David B Roberts, "Qatar and Japan: A Marriage of Convenience?," in *Kyoto-Durham Symposium* (Kyoto, Japan 2012), p.8.

exports to Japan (red line, below) decreased as Spain and Korea (from 2000 onwards in particular) imported more LNG and Qatar diversified its export markets (green bar below).

*Figure 3: Qatar's Dependence on Japan and LNG Destinations*

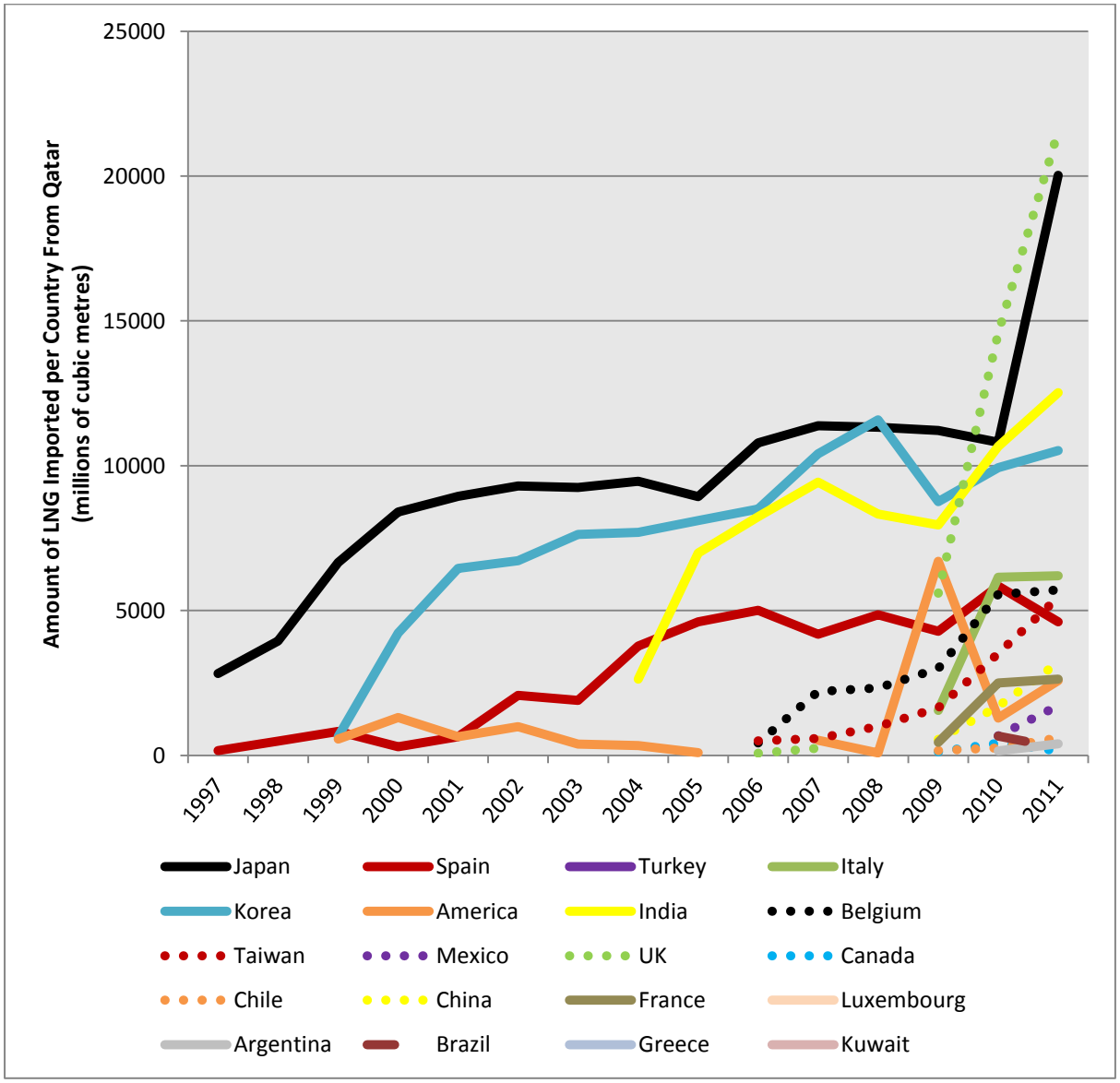



*Source: Natural Gas Information 2000-2012*[675]

Korea and Japan provided the mainstay of Qatar's LNG exports until 2004 when India began importing significant quantities of LNG. In the late 2000s the UK began to import large quantities of LNG from Qatar, becoming the top buyer in 2010 and 2011. As noted in the graph above, with new LNG trains coming online in 2006 and 2009, Qatar significantly diversified its suppliers to include Brazil, Chile, Kuwait, Luxembourg, and Mexico.

[675] "Natural Gas Information," in *IEA Statistics* (Paris: OCED, 2000); "Natural Gas Information," in *IEA Statistics* (Paris: OCED, 2005); "Natural Gas Information," in *IEA Statistics* (Paris: OCED, 2012).

*Figure 4: Qatar's LNG Exports By Importer 1997-2011*

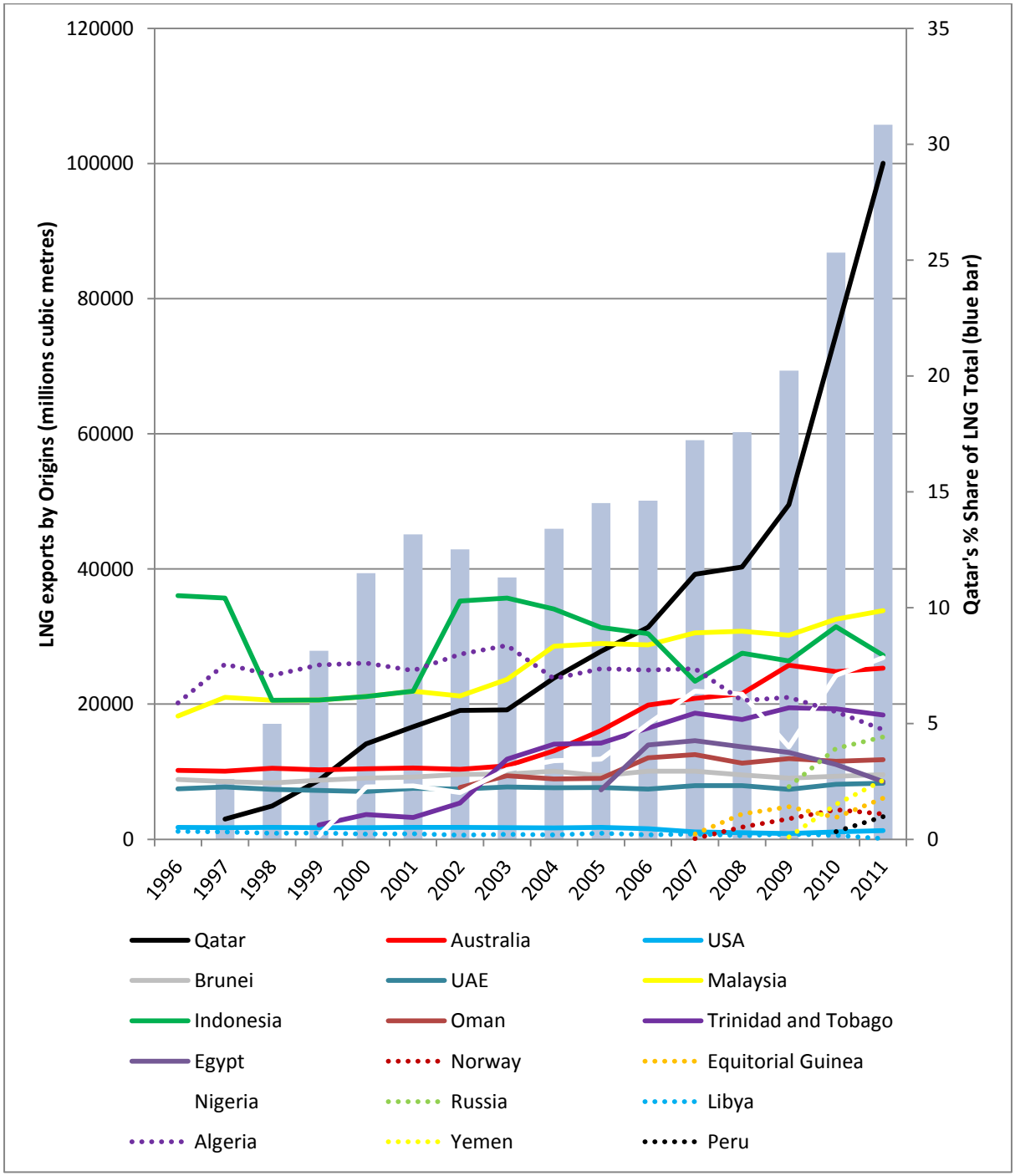



*Source: Natural Gas Information 2000-2012*[676]

When Qatar entered the LNG market in 1997 it exported 4 per cent of the world's LNG exports that year (blue bar, below). Indonesia (red line, below) was by far the world's largest LNG supplier while Algeria and Malaysia were substantial suppliers too.

[676] "Natural Gas Information; "Natural Gas Information; "Natural Gas Information."

*Figure 5: World's LNG Suppliers 1996-2011*




*Source: Natural Gas Information 2000-2012*[677]

Subsequently, Qatar became a mature and then powerful supplier with an ever growing share of the world LNG market. With its fourteenth train coming online in January 2011

[677] "Natural Gas Information; "Natural Gas Information; "Natural Gas Information."

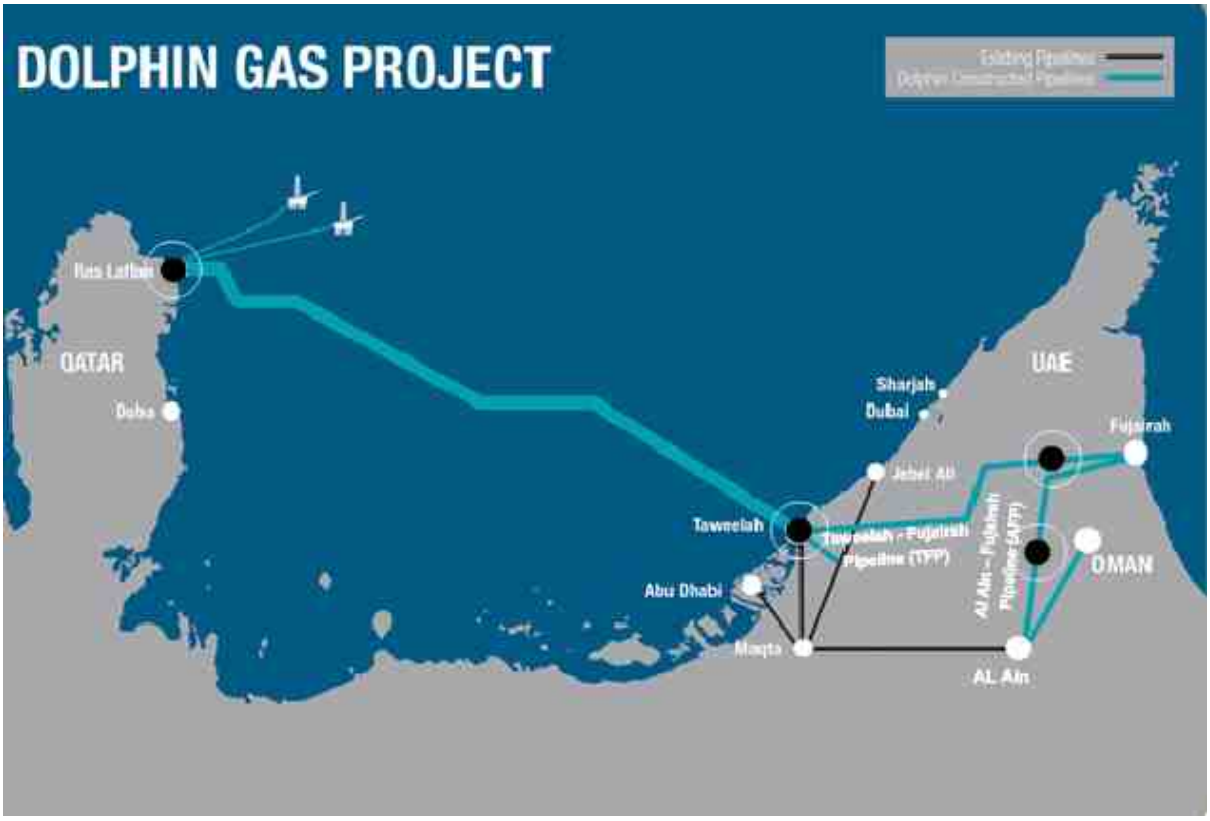
Qatar jumped to a 31 per cent market share accounting for nearly 90 per cent of the increase in LNG trade in 2011.[678] As of 2011, Qatar was by far the largest LNG producer in the world, a position it is expected to retain until the late 2010s.

The abandoned Phase two plan to establish a network of regional pipes was reanimated in the late-1990s. Saudi objections blocked any northward pipes to Bahrain and Kuwait, but their objections to a pipe going to the UAE and onto Oman were tenuous and eventually ignored. A subsection of the Emirati Ministry of Defence – the UAE Offsets Group (UOG) – and the Qatari Dolphin Group were created in 1999 to oversee and administer the new project piping Qatari gas to the UAE and onto Oman.[679] The desire from the Emirati side was multifaceted. Politically this move would increase regional integration between Qatar, the UAE, and Oman. Economically it made some sense given foreseeable energy shortages in the Emirates.

The project called for a 370km pipe to be laid from Qatar's processing facilities at Ras Laffan on the East coast to Abu Dhabi and new facilities to be built costing $3.5 billion in total.[680]

[678] "Bp Statistical Review of World Energy," p.4.
[679] Dargin, "The Dolphin Project: The Development of a Gulf Gas Initiative," p.34.
[680] Ibid., p.38.

*Figure 6 : Dolphin Energy Gas Pipelines*




*Source: Dolphin Energy website*[681]

January 2004 was, as Dargin notes "a truly historic moment in that it was the first ever cross-border gas transmission in the history of the GCC."[682] Subsequently, Dolphin came up to speed supplying 2 billion cubic feet per day (bcf/d) of natural gas to the UAE; approximately 30 per cent of the daily UAE demand as of 2012.[683] Though the UAE is currently seeking to maximise the pipe's capacity, which can supply up to 3.5 bcf/d to meet surging domestic demand, negotiations are proving to be difficult. It took the intervention of the Emir of Qatar to force QP to lower its price and considering that Qatar can sell the gas for a higher price via LNG, it will be hard to persuade the Qatari elite again to accept a loss to supply the UAE.

[681] "Dolphin Energy: Operations," www.doplhinenergy.com, http://www.dolphinenergy.com/operations.aspx.
[682] "The Dolphin Project: The Development of a Gulf Gas Initiative," p.38. ibid.
[683] Abedlghani Henni, "Dolphin Energy's Ceo: We Supply 30% of the Uae's Gas Demand," *JPT Online*(04 October 2012)

## Domestic

Despite the apparent difficulties, there was a certain inevitability about Qatar's move into the LNG market. As noted earlier, technically it has been an espoused goal since at least 1973.[684] However, there is a great deal of difference between remarking on a goal and mortgaging the country to engage in a risky paradigm-shifting venture. Indeed, Khalifah Bin Hamad and his elite seemed unwilling to take gas seriously. Their focus was dominated by oil and as Abdullah Bin Hamad Al Attiyah noted, the discovery of the world's largest gas field mostly within Qatari territory was greeted in some quarters with disappointment. Indeed, the timidity of the old regime in pursuing such a risky policy is summed up by Justin Dargin who discretely described Khalifah Bin Hamad as "far less aggressive in promoting the country's resource development."[685]

LNG began to be taken seriously and progress was made at the end of the 1980s as the new elite rose to power in Qatar, led from the front by Hamad Bin Khalifah. The international flavour of LNG policy making Qatar crucial to leading countries around the globe was exactly the kind of policy that one might expect to emanate from the new elite with their drive to internationalise Qatar.

The 1992 cabinet reshuffle got rid of "those Ministers who had long ceased attending their offices" and, like the 1989 reshuffle, was undertaken to breathe new life into the Qatari Government and to allow Hamad Bin Khalifah to install key allies.[686] Notably, Abdullah Bin Hamad Al Attiyah was given charge as the new Industry and Energy Ministry and made head of the board for QPGC, as it was then known.

While Khalifah Bin Hamad and his elite would probably have sought to develop Qatar's LNG capacity eventually, nothing about their priorities, their working practices, or their outlook suggests they would have pursued this opportunity with anything like the speed and success of their successors. Part of this assertion is an issue of vision as much as it is a question of personnel. In terms of the former, the old elite's actions were characterised by caution and a resolutely intra-regional mind-set. The decision to mortgage Qatar's future income made

[684] "Japanese Participate in Lng Development."
[685] Dargin, "The Dolphin Project: The Development of a Gulf Gas Initiative," p.2.
[686] Boyce, "Qatar: Annual Review for 1992."

in the early-1990s when the new elite were mostly running the country in all but name is the kind of risky decision that was to characterise their tenure and bears little resemblance to any old elite policies. Equally, aside from a spate of Embassy openings and rounds of dolling out foreign aid when economic times permitted, the old elite seldom sought prolonged and involved interaction with anyone outwith the Gulf region. Deeply and inextricably intertwining the economy of Qatar with that of Japan, Spain, Korea and later on in particular the UK is a feature very much associated with the new rather than the old elite.

In terms of personnel Khalifah Bin Hamad was, for much of his tenure, the personification of a hands-on ruler and in the 1970s and early 1980s he insisted on signing all cheques of approximately $50,000 and over.[687] Such a lack of delegation of responsibility is deleterious on efficiency and severely impinges upon long, complex negotiation. Indeed, it is no wonder that Hashimoto *et al* conclude that this kind of "lack of institutionalized decision-making in Qatar likely stalled progress in negotiating the complexities of LNG development."[688] They go on to quote a Shell executive who worked in Qatar at the time as noting that the situation was also vastly complicated and made worse by the presence of 'advisors' who "were not unnaturally intent on protecting their positions and so raised question after question to justify their presence."[689]

While Qatar is today still plagued by the overbearingly top-down nature of politics, a younger, more energetic elite intent on pursuing LNG as a crucial piece in their plan to bolster Qatar's independence naturally places more emphasis on LNG. Moreover, in the person of Abdullah Bin Hamad Al Attiyah, the new elite installed a trusted executive who doggedly, effectively, and professionally focused on the gas industry in Qatar.

Both the old and the new elite felt pressure to use the gas industry to diversify Qatar's income to maintain the ruling bargain and the generous Qatari welfare state. The key difference was that the new elite were more dynamic in pursuing such a goal as opposed to the more plodding lethargy and reluctance to change that characterises many ageing Arab Governments. Indeed, as many changes as the new elite brought to Qatar they did not seek

[687] Hashimoto, Elass, and Eller, "Liquified Natural Gas from Qatar: The Qatargas Project," p.10.
Brant, "Valedictory from Qatar: A Land of Promise," p.3.
[688] Hashimoto, Elass, and Eller, "Liquified Natural Gas from Qatar: The Qatargas Project," p.10.
[689] Ibid.

to alter the basic ruling bargain. This understanding demands that the citizens do not agitate for a political say in how the country is run and in return they receive cradle-to-grave welfare support from the government while paying no taxes. This system can only function with a successful rentier economy, which typically requires significant oil or gas rent for the state to distribute. Bolstering this bargain by offering the public more and better services for free is an obvious goal of government in Qatar and a goal that getting the LNG industry up and running meets.

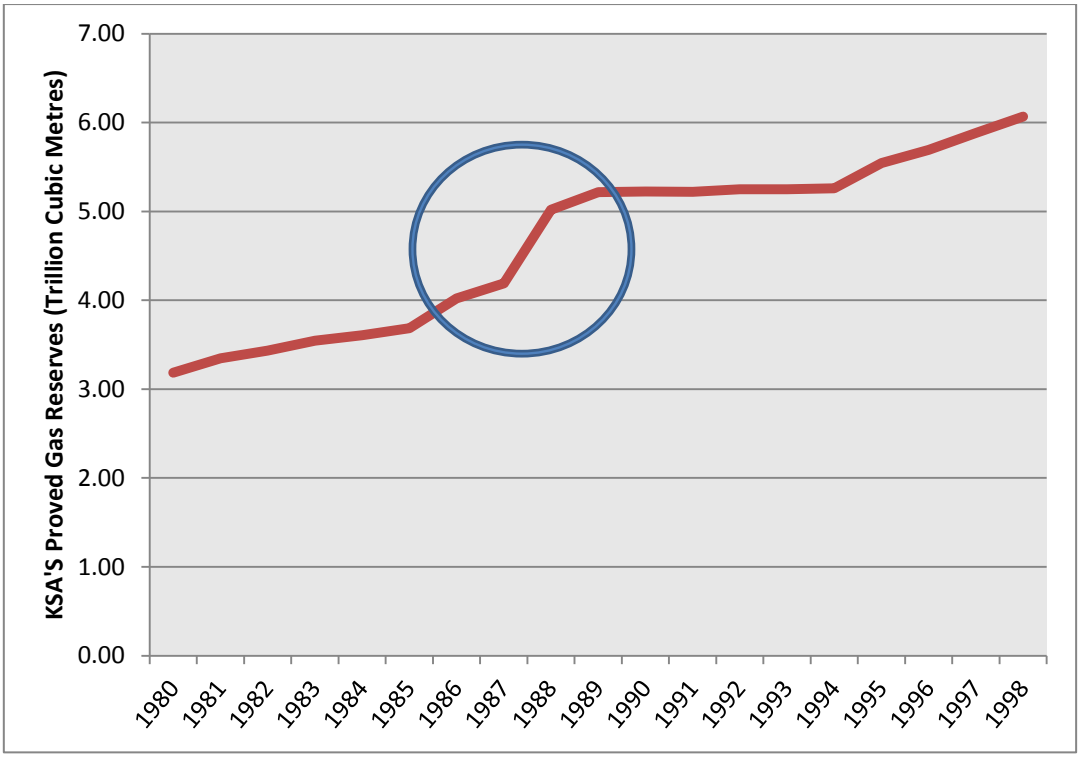
Moreover, though this bargain was strong in Qatar in the 1990s, it had suffered in the early 1980s in particular when the constriction in global oil prices and production meant that services and jobs had to be cut and charges introduced. It was readily apparent that the source of the state's income needed to be diversified to maintain the rentier bargain without even considering the added dimension of the vast array of plans that the new elite had. New LNG policies were the key to unlocking Hamad Bin Khalifah vision for Qatar.

## Regional

Once more Saudi Arabia is of key importance influencing the decision making hierarchy within Qatar and informing major policy changes. Following the 1988 and 1989 GCC meetings that initially welcomed Qatar's regional gas initiatives, over the next few years Saudi Arabia's elite changed its position on the matter for various reasons.

Firstly, Saudi Arabia's own gas reserves increased not insubstantially towards the end of the 1980s.

*Figure 7 : Saudi Arabia's Proved Gas Reserves 1980-1998*




*Source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2010*[690]

From 4.19 trillion cubic metres (tcm) in 1987 they increased by around 30% or more than 1 million tcm by 1989 to 5.22tcm, as indicated by the blue circle. With the potential of more to come this spurt reminded Saudi policy makers that they themselves might want to become gas exporters some day and that facilitating Qatar's expansion in this field could harm such opportunities. Indeed, Saudi Arabia had implemented a 'Master Gas' system in the early 1980s to try to collect more of the associated gas from its prodigious oil production, showing it was increasingly aware of gas as a potential energy alternative.[691]

Secondly, Saudi Arabia was doubtless unhappy to see the younger elite increasingly take the lead in Qatar and engage in policies such as seeking to build relations with Iran. Similarly, without waiting for Saudi Arabia to take the lead, as noted, Qatar established diplomatic relations with both the Soviet Union and China in 1988 and had been burnishing its NAM credentials throughout the late 1980s indicating an increasing distancing from Saudi

[690] "Bp Statistical Review of World Energy," (London: British Petroleum (BP), 2010).
[691] Dargin, "The Dolphin Project: The Development of a Gulf Gas Initiative," p.21.

leadership.[692] Stymying these new gas initiatives could have been seen as a way by the Saudi elite to put Qatar in its place.

Thirdly, these emerging bilateral issues were consolidated by the border skirmishes in 1992, 1993, and 1994 which led to deaths on both sides. Moreover, the 1995 coup in Qatar caused relations to plunge with the conservative Saudi state unwilling to countenance a son usurping his father, while at least one Saudi-supported counter-coup finished bilateral relations in all but name. Even without this dislocation in the bilateral relationship the new Qatari elite had shown they were unwilling to maintain their dependency on Saudi Arabia. They knew their policy orientation – progressive and international – would never have been sanctioned by Riyadh and they understood Qatar was not benefitting from whatever tacit protective agreements were in place with the Kingdom increasingly seen as a paper tiger.

The LNG policies were crucial in two ways in facilitating Qatar's escape from Saudi Arabia's 'gravitational pull,' as Dargin called it.[693] Firstly, financially it allowed Qatar to engage in a range of policies whereby Qatar sought to reach beyond its previously Saudi-dominated international relations to the wider international community. In short, it facilitated Qatar becoming a meaningful international actor and not just a small-scale regional player. Secondly, it also deliberately intertwined Qatar with a number of key international countries in an inextricable and crucial energy-economic nexus. Qatar was diversifying its international alliances, no longer needing to listen to or follow the Saudi line.

Surging demand in Oman and particularly in the Emirates was a key catalyst in reanimating the Phase two intra-regional pipeline project.[694] Though the Emirates is flush with oil and gas it chooses to export it for a higher price; a standard tactic in hydrocarbon producing states. Moreover, its sour gas deposits, though plentiful, have long been thought uneconomical in terms of tapping them for domestic energy consumption. Both countries seek greater supplies from Qatar going forward if they are not to suffer from "substantial gas

[692] *Government Cancels Debts for 10 Countries*.
[693] "The Dolphin Project: The Development of a Gulf Gas Initiative," p.2.
[694] For a summary of the UAE's energy woes see "Addressing the UAE Natural Gas Crisis: Stratagies for a Rational Energy Policy," in *Policy Brief* (Dubai, UAE: The Dubai Initiative; Belfer Centre for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School, August 2010).

shortages."[695] As Dargin continues to note, this potentially places Qatar in a strong position. Already Dubai and other Emirates have suffered from relatively severe petrol shortages.[696] Put in such a context the uneconomical sale of gas to the UAE and to Oman makes more sense as a wily political gambit guaranteeing Qatar influence in the region.[697]

## International

Expected growth in Asian economies facilitated the decision in Qatar to invest heavily – via debt – in the LNG industry. From 1975-1996 LNG demand from the Asia Pacific region was strong at around 3.31bcm per year; a significant amount given that this accounted for more than the capacity of the average LNG train at that time (as in new demand demanded the creation of the equivalent of one new train per year).[698] From 1980 to 1992 the gross national product of 11 key Asian countries (Japan, Korea, Taiwan, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, and India) grew at just under 5 per cent per year with many countries individually outstripping this rate.[699] Such growth has a commensurate effect upon energy demand, which also grew at a healthy rate.[700] Such economic growth would necessarily have to be fuelled by a growth in energy imports and the Asia Pacific region is - *ceteris paribus* - "poor in resources, particularly in oil and gas."[701] Oil from the Middle East would be a part of the answer. Equally, LNG would take an ever more prominent role too. It had been seen as a relatively clean fuel as far back as 1974 and the premium placed on avoiding dirtier fuels only increased.[702] Indeed, in the mid-1980s

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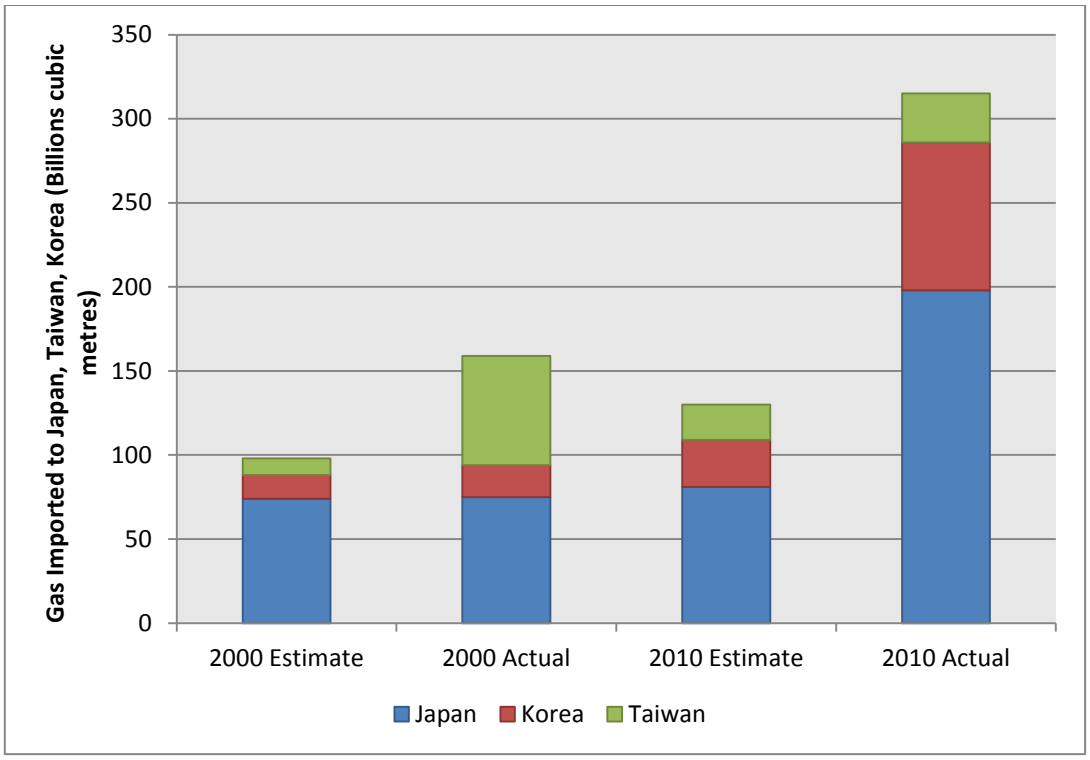
[695] "The Gas Revolution in Qatar," p.331.
It must be remembered that a structural problem exists throughout the Gulf States in that their domestic energy prices cannot realistically reflect the cost of production. As per the ruling bargain, subsidies are universal and the citizenry expect if not demand to pay either no charges for domestic energy supply (as in Qatar) or at least highly subsidised energy and fuel. This hamstrings GCC States and is a significant extra cost for them to bear.

[696] Sara Hamdan, "Gasoline Crusis in Emirates Brings Lines and Fears," *The New York Times* 15 June 2011.
[697] While Dolphin gas may make a profit, the opportunity cost is high; significantly larger profits can be made by selling the gas via LNG to East Asia demand.
[698] James T. Jensen, "The Development of a Global Lng Market," (Oxford: Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, 2004), p.8.
[699] Ken Koyama, "Growing Energy Demand in Asian Countries: Opportunities and Constraints for Gulf Energy Exporters," in *Gulf Energy and the World: Challenges and Threats* (Abu Dhabi: The Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research, 1997), p.45-6.
[700] Ibid., p.48.
[701] Kang Wu and Jit Yang Lim, "Supplying Asia-Pacific Oil Demand: Role of the Gulf," in *Gulf Oil and Gas: Ensuring Economic Security* (Abu Dhabi: The Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research, 2007), p.255.
[702] Koyama, "Growing Energy Demand in Asian Countries: Opportunities and Constraints for Gulf Energy Exporters," p.56.

some even expected gas to become the world's leading fuel such were its intrinsic advantages.[703]

Back in the mid-1990s only Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan were importing LNG in Asia. Estimates from the Institute of Energy Economics in Japan suggested that their LNG demand would double by 2010. In fact their estimates were far off; demand from these three alone was to increase 480 per cent from 65 to 314 billion cubic metres (bcm) of LNG imports from 1992 to 2010.[704]

***Figure 8 : Actual v Estimated LNG Imports for Japan, Korea & Taiwan***




*Source: IEA Natural Gas Information & Koyama*[705]

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"Japan's Uncertain Energy Prospects: The Problem of Import Dependence," *Energy Policy* (September 1974): p.214.

[703] Don Hedley, *World Energy: The Facts and the Future* (London: Euromonitor Publications, 1986), p.38.

[704] "Natural Gas Information."

"Natural Gas Information," in *IEA Statistics* (Paris: OCED, 2001).

Koyama, "Growing Energy Demand in Asian Countries: Opportunities and Constraints for Gulf Energy Exporters," p.57.

[705] "Natural Gas Information."

"Natural Gas Information."

"Growing Energy Demand in Asian Countries: Opportunities and Constraints for Gulf Energy Exporters," p.57.

But this was not even the beginning. By 2010 China and India were significant LNG customers for Qatar importing 47 bcm of gas.[706] In short, though one must be careful about pontificating from hindsight, there was cause to be assured that there would be significant demand for LNG were Qatar to develop this capacity.

Much of the Western literature focusing on the meaning of the end of the Cold War unsurprisingly discusses this watershed event as a victory of the capitalist method. This means different things to different people but there is often a sense that the fall of the Berlin Wall precipitated or was the harbinger of an era of increased globalisation. In such an age the autonomy of the state was seen by some to be under threat and others hyperbolically touted "the end of geography."[707] Increased economic trade in this brave new world would "create positive economic interdependencies that contribute to global stability, prosperity, and security."[708] Or, in yet more bombastic terms as Bergsten writing in *Foreign Affairs* put it "the international position of individual counties will derive increasingly from their economic prowess rather than their military capability."[709]

With hindsight one can see hubris and excitement colouring the thoughts of practitioners. For example, the imminent economic collapse of Japan as a state assumed to take over from America as the world's largest economy made a mockery of some of the analysis that was predicated on Japan being along with the US and Europe part of the new tri-polar world. Nevertheless, the international spectrum had changed significantly. The constrictions that the Cold War fostered such as the zero-sum nature of international relationships and the unusually acute preoccupation with security were either gone or no longer as acute. Such changes created a space for countries like Qatar. In the most basic terms, Qatar could not have exported LNG to Italy, Korea, and America as it did in 1999 without – whether it wanted to or not – pinning its colours to the non-Soviet mast.

Along with the supposed economic-empowerment that occurred after the end of the Cold War, it could be argued that Qatar plugged neatly into the new cooperative ethos that

[706] "Natural Gas Information."
[707] O'Brien quoted in Clair Apodaca, "Global Economic Patterns and Personal Integrity Rights after the Cold War," *International Studies Quarterly* 45(2001): p.587.
[708] Cindy Hurst, "Liquified Natural Gas: The Next Prize?," in *Energy Security Challenges for the 21st Century*, ed. Gal Luft and Anne Korin (Santa Barbara; CA: ABC CLIO, 2009), P.279.
[709] Fred C. Bergsten, "The World Economy after the Cold War," *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1990): p.96.

pervaded. No longer riven with division between two poles, the international realm was more amenable to overtures and attempts to forge new relations. Qatar's attempts to use its gas as a hook to build and augment relations with Israel as well as with India and Pakistan were attempts towards such a goal.

These international relations that Qatar was building and consolidating with its LNG trade placed Qatar in a position of importance that otherwise it would not have. Potentially on matters of hard security, such ties could come into use. Indeed, the more Qatar engages in tapping its shared field with Iran and the more revenue it draws from it, the more Qatar is vulnerable to Iran. Incidents in the mid-2000s showed the Iranian willingness to attack and steal equipment from Qatar's unmanned rigs and were doubtless the encapsulation of long-held Qatari fears.[710] America's security umbrella is of primary importance protecting Qatar, but a web of influential international actors increasingly dependent upon Qatar for their gas supply has its own benefits as well.

Firstly, should Qatar need political backing in an international forum such as the UN Security Council, then providing a sizable proportion of the energy mix of important states could give Qatar considerable influence. Secondly, Japan has historically positive relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran.[711] Were Qatari-Iranian relations escalating to the point where LNG production and shipping were threatened, Japan would be forced to use its relations with Iran to seek some kind of a workable accommodation if it was not to potentially quickly run short of gas. The same logic applies to all of Qatar's LNG customers. In the case of the UK, Qatar has made its security of supply a concern of the first order: if the UK wants its gas and there is Iranian aggression, it is necessary for the UK to 'keep the lights on' to join with the international community to find a solution. To paraphrase a British Member of the House of Lords, the British Government knows only too well that were Qatar's LNG to be halted, the UK would be "up shit creek."[712] This kind of corollary is of key importance to Qatar in becoming such a prolific energy exporter.

[710] "Qatar Considers Ways of Keeping Iranians Off Their Rigs," *Gulf States Newsletter*, no. 845 (16 January 2009).
[711] Personal Interview: Senior Japanese Policy Maker & Practitioners in the Oil Market, 09 April 2012.
[712] Roger Harrabin, "Gas-Fired Power Stations to Be Encouraged by Government," *BBC News*(03 December 2012)

## Arab Spring Policies

The Arab Spring continues to be one of the most tumultuous periods in modern Arab history. Staunch dictators embedded in power for decades were in some cases quickly evicted from power by popular unrest. It is a phenomenon almost without parallel that affected almost all states of the wider Middle East region. The only state in the entire Arab World that saw practically no domestic ramifications was Qatar. Nevertheless, the Spring had important effects on Qatar's foreign policy for it provided Qatar's leadership with the space to engage in resoundingly different policies. From a state where Qatar often tried to retain something of an air of neutrality (such as in mediation in Lebanon or with GCC-Iranian relations) during the Spring, Qatar was foremost in actively seeking support to overthrow regional leaders.

Most notably Qatar took action in Libya across the political, financial, and military spectrum.[713] Diplomatically, Qatar was the first Arab state to recognise the emerging transnational council (TNC) leadership, only days after France led the way. In terms of trade and finance, Qatar supported various rebel groups with money and goods from cooking oil to weapons. Qatar traded oil under the control of the rebel groups on their behalf to get around sanctions on the Libyan regime. Crucially, along with the UAE, Qatar gave the NATO alliance the political cover it required by joining in patrolling the no-fly zone over Libya. In order to do this Qatar sent six of its Mirage fighter-jets – accounting for the majority of its operational fighter jet capacity[714] – three thousand miles to the Libyan theatre; a move without precedence in Qatar's history.[715] Towards the end of the campaign as more of Libya fell out of loyal Gaddafi hands Qatar became bolder and inserted elements of its Special Forces to help train and coordinate the rebels, in addition to flying some groups to Doha for

[713] For an article summing up Qatar's actions in Libya and the reasons behind it see David B Roberts, "Behind Qatar's Intervention in Libya," *Foreign Affairs* (28th September 2011).

[714] Qatar has twelve Mirage jets in total. However, as a rule with such high-end machinery there is almost never an occasion when all of them are working at the same time. Add to this Qatar's poor reputation in terms of repair and continual maintenance of its military equipment and the remaining Qatari fighter jet capacity ready to protect the homeland during the Libyan campaign was negligible.

[715] It should be noted that Qatari troops were involved in the Gulf War in a set-piece battle under US supervision though its air force has never undertaken such an action. Indeed, the novelty of the action was shown in the fact that Qatari pilots had never practiced air-to-air refuelling until they had to en route to bases in the Mediterranean.

training.[716] Never before had Qatar taken such direct and combative action to unseat a regional leader.

Qatar continues to play a similarly prominent role in the evolving Syrian crisis. Initially Qatar sought to use strong personal elite-to-elite relations to persuade President Assad to step aside. Even though these relations went back many years and are considered to have been strong, the entrenched position of Assad proved to be too much for the Qatari elite to alter. Even overtures from Al Mayassa Bint Hamad Al Thani, the Emir's daughter, to Assad's wife Asma proved to be futile.[717] Subsequently, when it became clear that Qatari efforts had failed, the leadership in Qatar moved swiftly to lead the international efforts to remove Assad from power.

While Qatar has not supported the rebels in Syria as comprehensively as their counterparts in Libya, Qatar has still been at the forefront of the international push to oust President Assad and corral support for the opposition. Though details are sparse, it appears that 2011 and 2012 saw Qatar supplying - at the very least - significant non-military support as well as light weaponry and some manpads (man-portable air defence systems).[718]

Qatar led diplomatic activities including hosting key conferences to galvanise support against the Syrian regime and handing over the Embassy in Doha to the main opposition group, the Syrian National Council (SNC).[719] While Qatar has distributed its material support widely, much of its financial and political support has been centred on the SNC, an organisation that has become increasingly dominated by the Muslim Brotherhood.[720] In addition to the Emir repeatedly calling for Arab-led intervention, Qatar, Turkey and a variety of other countries repeatedly held meetings with opposition groups to discuss how to corral the disparate opposition based both externally and internally into forming a meaningful opposition in waiting.[721] Mid-November 2012 saw Doha host key meetings during which Qatar proved to be as pragmatic as ever. Having realised that the SNC was proving

[716] Coker, Dagher, and Levinson, "Tiny Kingdom's Huge Role in Libya Draws Concern".
[717] Tom Gara, "Assad Emails Signal Relaxation Amid Revolt," *The Financial Times* 15 March 2012.
[718] David Sanger, "Rebel Arms Flow Is Said to Benefit Jihadists in Syria," *The New York Times* 14 October 2012.
[719] "Syria Crisis: Qatar Handing Embassy over to Opposition".
[720] Personal Interview: Michael Stephens, Rusi Researcher, 18 March 2013.
[721] "Qatari Emir: Arabs Must Intervene in Syria," *Al Jazeera*(26 September 2012)

ineffective, Qatar followed the American line backing a plan by prominent opposition figure Riad Seif's instead.[722]

The support for ousting Bashar Al Assad is more surprising than Qatar's actions in Libya as the Assad regime is one of the central allies of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Owing to Syria's location, history, and the groups that Syria and Iran have sponsored for many years (Hezbollah and Hamas) Syria is a key plinth of Iran's extended deterrence.[723] Iran has long known it is unable to compete on a symmetric basis with Israel, American forces in the region, and even Arab Gulf state forces.[724] Instead Iran has, via groups such as Hezbollah (whose links to Iran are undisputed if issues of command and control are far more nuanced[725]), developed a fearsome reputation as an entity that can muster potentially significant asymmetric power and retaliatory capability if necessary.[726]

Iran's defence posture in the Gulf is based not on its traditional capabilities but, for example, on its asymmetric fast boats captained by elements of its Revolutionary Guards and by its mining capability; two typical examples of asymmetric warfare.[727] But Iran also wants the ability to project its power and influence pan-regionally.[728] Whether Iran wants this power to facilitate Iran's entry into the Palestinian issue or as a mechanism of defence vis-à-vis a potential Israeli strike on its putative nuclear programme, the result is the same. Via the creation and continued support of Hezbollah and (to a lesser though at one time extensive degree) Hamas, Iran has guaranteed its place in Levantine and Israeli discussions. Not only did Iran place itself in the middle of the central issue of the Muslim world, but it

[722] AP, "Syria's Opposition Fail to Show United Front at Qatar Conference," *The Guardian*(04 November 2012)
[723] Rafael D Frankel, "Keeping Hamas and Hezbollah out of a War with Iran," *The Washington Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (2012).
[724] Though this last assertion must be heavily qualified it is certain that the Gulf States have a significant technological, qualitative edge. For one small example of this see Josh Rogin, "Petraeus: The Uae's Air Force Could Take out Iran's," *Foreign Policy*(17 December 2009)
[725] See Frederic M. Wehrey et al., "Dangerous but Not Omnipotent: Exploring the Reach and Limitations of Iranian Power in the Middle East," (Santa Minoca, CA: RAND, 2009), p.39-80.
[726] See Casey L Addis and Christopher M Blanchard, "Hezbollah: Background and Issues for Confress," in *CRS Report for Confress* (Washington DC: Congressioal Research Service, 03 January 2011), p.3-5.
[727] For an authoritative view of Iran's conventional and asymmetric capabilities see Anthony H. Cordesman and Alexander Wilner, "Iran and the Gulf Military Balance - 1: The Conventional and Ssymetric Dimensions," (Washington DC: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 28 June 2012). See pages 72-106 for an examination of the growing asymmetric capabilities of Iran.
[728] Wehrey et al., "Dangerous but Not Omnipotent: Exploring the Reach and Limitations of Iranian Power in the Middle East," p.xvi-xvii.

ensured it retained some punitive capability over Israel. Syria is the lynchpin of Iranian foreign policy; the central state facilitator in the battle against Israel.[729] Indeed, this role was eulogised by Hassan Nasrallah, the Secretary General of Hezbollah, in 2011 in an effort to defend the Assad regime in the midst of its bloody actions in the escalating Syrian civil war.[730]

Just as theorists argue that development of missile defence shields are potentially destabilising to the equilibrium between two nuclear armed states for it potentially alters the calculations if one state feels that it can avoid the mutually assured destruction that an exchange of fire is believed to bring, so too potentially removing President Assad with his strong Iranian links may be destabilising. Without the active support of the Syrian state, though Iran's support of Hezbollah and their ilk will not end, it will be impeded. Aside from the effect of this on the equilibrium of the region, the fact is that Qatar will have played a key role in undermining a core foreign policy plinth of Iran. Given the importance of placating and building relations with Iran that has been a hallmark of Qatar's foreign policy since the early 1990s, this is a surprising move for Qatar to have made.

Aside from the generic support of forces seeking the removal of the Syrian regime, Qatar played a role in persuading Hamas not to continue its implicit support of the Syrian regime.[731] Hamas in the form of its leader Khaled Mishaal has been a long-term associate of Qatar. He has sporadically lived in Doha and had access to the Emir for many years. In October 2012 the Emir of Qatar was the first Head of State to visit the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip since the 2006 elections. This was a significant visit that indicated not only Hamas' desire to reorient its position away from Iran but Qatar's key role therein.

Qatar's prominent role in Syria and Libya as well as its significant financial support offered to the new regimes in Egypt and Tunisia is often contrasted unfavourably with the lack of reaction in Bahrain. In 2011 in particular, the situation in Bahrain was deteriorating quickly. The Government engaged in a protracted harsh repression against its people and broke

[729] For a historical background on this crucial relationship see Jubin M. Goodarzi, *Syria and Iran: Diplomatic Alliance and Power Politics in the Middle East* (New York, NY: IB Tauris, 2006).
[730] Hamid Dabashi, "Arab Spring Exposes Nasrallah's Hypocrisy," *Al Jazeera*(22 June 2011)
[731] Giorgio Cafiero, "Hamas in the New Middle East," *Foreign Policy in Focus*(15 November 2012)
Roberts, "Why Is Qatar Mucking around in Gaza?".

international laws and norms.[732] Without doubt, there were some riotous elements in the opposition's marches, yet the consensus in the form of the Bassiouni report rightly lays the majority of the blame at the feet of the Al Khalifah, Bahrain's ruling elite. Against this repression not fifty kilometres from Qatar itself, the relative lack of Qatari reaction is seen as an example of double standards and fuels accusations that Qatar does not pursue a noble cause but merely pursues policies under an enlightened, progressive façade.

### Domestic

One criticism of Qatar's actions in the Arab Spring asserts that Qatar is supporting the formation of democracy abroad to stave-off engaging in democratic practices domestically.[733] Yet this kind of proposition does not stand up to much scrutiny. Despite no discernible widespread desire for democratic developments in Qatar, the Emir announced in late 2011 that long-delayed Parliamentary elections would go ahead in 2013 though doubts remain midway through 2013 as to whether the elections will actually take place. Moreover, as Justin Gengler has shown, "in the six tumultuous months spanning December 2010 and June 2011, support for democracy and interest in political participation has dropped markedly among Qatari citizens."[734] This conclusion is of no surprise for someone who has spent years researching, studying, conducting interviews, and working in Qatar where the overwhelming reaction to questions of democratic development in Qatar is apathy. Indeed, the notion that Qatar's elite seek to ferment democracy abroad to stave off implementing it domestically is just not credible.

There are, however, other motivations stemming from the domestic arena in Qatar. The notion that Qatari leadership are taking the lead among all states in the Arab world and are vociferously supporting the rights of Arabs against oppression by increasingly delegitimised

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[732] "Bahrain Court Senences Medics to Prison," *BBC News*(21 November 2012)
"The King's Risky Move," *The Economist* (26 November 2011).
Mahmoud Cherif Bassiouni et al., "Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry," (Manama, Bahrain23 November 2011).

[733] This argument is referred to in various opinion pieces and articles including
Francine Kiefer, "Qatar: The Small Arab Monarchy with the Loud Democratic Voice," *The Christian Science Monitor*(27 May 2011) and
Justin Gengler, "Qatar's Ambivalent Democratization," *Foreign Policy*(01 November 2011)

[734] "Qatar's Ambivalent Democratization".
For more detail see "The Political Costs of Qatar's Western Orientation," *Middle East Policy* XIX, no. 4 (Winter 2012).

Arab regimes plays well in Doha. Indeed, this ties into aspects of the Qatari brand where the support for worthy, just causes is a reoccurring trope. While the leadership may be undertaking these policies motivated by a desire to bolster their domestic popularity, such policies are also intrinsically reflective of the elite's thinking. In the language of Nonneman's theory which suggests that the leadership's role conception is crucial in the domestic setting for instigating foreign policy, in Qatar the Emir feels a sense of incumbency to help as and when he can. Remembering that policy in Qatar can be made by but one or two men, the "personal decision" of the Emir is of crucial importance.[735] The Qatari elite feel that there has been a "regional void" in recent decades with Baghdad being decimated by war, Cairo decaying under an introspective dictator, and Riyadh having no dynamism with its septuagenarian and octogenarian leaders.[736] In the absence of these traditional powers and fuelled by a belief that Qatar ought to help if it can – consecrated in Article 7 of Qatar's constitution which encourages Qatar to engage in settling disputes peacefully – Qatar has acted. This kind of explanation focusing particularly on the Emir's personal proclivities is echoed time and again in meetings in Doha with diplomats and Qataris alike.[737]

Lastly, basic factors affecting the Emir's decision making status are important. Facilitated by significant fiscal wealth, protected by America and key allies, the potential speed of action stemming from one decision maker with little bureaucratic impediment are significant enabling factors.

## Regional

Placating Iran and establishing friendly relations with the Persian State have been key policies of Qatar from the early 1990s. Qatar sought to do this by opening amicable dialogues, seeking to entangle Iran in trading relations, supporting key Iranian allies financially and with diplomatic protection, and by undermining international isolation of Iran. The desire to build relations with Iran stems from a combination of fear and a pragmatic assessment of Qatar's regional concerns.

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[735] "Qatar and Libya Open a New Geopolitical Axis in North Africa," *Gulf States Newsletter* 35, no. 907 (02 September 2011): p.1.
[736] Roula Khalaf, "Qatar Steps in to Fill Regional Void," *The Financial Times* 30 November 2011.
[737] Personal Interview: Qatari Elite Policy Maker, 13 December 2012.
Personal Interview: Qatar-Based European Ambassador, 22 January 2013.

As the North Field became ever more crucial to Qatar's continued economic success and development, Qatar's dependency on it increased as did its vulnerability to disruption of the field. Given that the field is shared with Iran, that there is a history of antagonism between the Arab and Persian sides of the Gulf, and one can point to real-world examples of Iran attacking Qatari rigs, the fears are not without foundation. With these concerns in mind Qatar's elite feels that engagement is better than confrontation.

For Qatar to undertake actions that undermine important and long-standing Iranian foreign policies (as in Syria) and go against tenets of Qatar's foreign policy for two decades is surprising. It suggests that the Qatari elite believes that, 1) the fear from Iran has decreased, or 2) the fear of Iran remains but is well mitigated, or 3) Qatar no longer wishes to seek to bring Iran in from the cold, or 4) risks remain but the feeling of compulsion to intervene in Syria was overwhelming.

There is no empirical evidence suggesting that the threat from Iran has diminished. However, two decades augmenting relations with Iran and so overtly seeking to build relations sometimes to the detriment of Qatar's position with local allies has improved their bilateral relations. However, relations are not genuinely warm. Even accounting for Hamad Bin Jassim's desire to tell the US Administration what it wants to hear, his quote to a visiting US official about Iran noting that "they lie to us, we lie to them" is an accurate encapsulation of their bilateral relationship. Interviews with Qataris and Diplomats in Doha reinforce this notion that bilateral relations are more of a façade of fraternal relations than genuinely warm. Nevertheless, Qatar has established a reputation as a country that certainly does not overtly seek to provoke or harm Iran unlike other Gulf countries like Saudi Arabia. Along with the US presence in Qatar, these factors may have increased the elite's confidence that either Iran's threat has declined or that it remains but is sufficiently mitigated to engage in actions in Syria.

From the Iranian side, Tehran clearly values its relationship with Qatar. Not only has Qatar's support boosted Iran and its proxies but their often overt 'positive, fraternal relations' as they are perennially described, has undercut US and Saudi-led efforts to contain Iran. Qatar is thus a useful ally for Iran particularly at a time when Iran is sorely lacking allies as international sanctions begin to bite like never before.

The notion that Qatar is engaging in an aggressive policy aimed at undermining Iran is not persuasive. Such a nakedly aggressive policy towards Iran has never been a trait of Qatar's foreign policy and there is no other evidence or rationale suggesting that Qatar has changed its fundamental view that dialogue is preferable to military action. It is plausible that a motivation for supporting the anti-Assad forces stems from an elite desire to take this opportunity to undercut Iran's support in the region, but Qatar's history is overwhelmingly of caution towards Iran.

The core reason for Qatar's actions in Syria will be a selection of factors stemming from the elite's view of the situation. While Iranian-Qatari relations are amicable and while the fear of Iran has been increasingly mitigated by America's entrenched and advanced support, Qatar's elite would be foolish not to recognise the continuing threat of Iran. Without good reason to suppose the threat has empirically lessened – Qatar remains as vulnerable and as secure as it ever has towards Iran – the elite must have concluded that its actions in Syria are permissible and will not unduly aggravate the Iranians. Two decades of policies engaging positively with Iran have built up a reputation of Qatar as a state that seeks dialogue and does not seek to pin Iran into a corner. Qatar is banking on this reputation to keep it safe from Iran.

On the other side of the Gulf an oft quoted reason for Qatar's intervention in Syria and its support of particular groups therein is because of Qatar's desire to compete regionally with Saudi Arabia.[738] This is something of a reflexive retort by journalists; an automatic assumption that the two states are engaging in a game of geopolitical chess to support particular sides for some as yet unnamed future eventuality. While it is certainly possible that Qatar wants to maintain some control over groups in Syria separate from Saudi Arabia, it is equally likely that the divisions in support are a simple result of the contacts that each side has. Qatar does not have the intelligence or the assets to actively seek out particular contacts; they use what they have. While not as satisfying an answer as issues of international intrigue, the reality of Qatar's limited options in offering support in Syria (or elsewhere) are persuasive.

[738] Khalaf and Fielding-Smith, "How Qatar Seized Control of the Syrian Revolution."
Rania Abouzeid, "Syria's Secular and Islamist Rebels: Who Are the Saudis and the Qataris Arming?," *Time Magazine*(18 September 2012)

Having said this, it is important to address the fact that most of the religious exiles that the Qatari authorities have allowed to settle in Doha over the years have often been of a Brotherhood persuasion and not, for example, Imams of the Salafi persuasion coming from Saudi Arabia. It is understandable that Qatar would not want to host controversial religious actors expelled from Saudi Arabia: such an act could be deemed to be deeply unfriendly for religion is of central importance to the Kingdom. While Qatar has often undertaken actions in the 1990s and 2000s that annoy the elite in Riyadh, each one is judged on its own merits and the Qatari elite are careful not to go too far. Otherwise, it is no secret that though Qatar is technically a Wahhabi state, in reality neither any of the top-most elite, official cultural or educational foundations, nor the Foreign Ministry have ever overtly pushed a Wahhabi line. Aside from specific and isolated examples, the State of Qatar simply does not have a history, unlike its neighbour Saudi Arabia, of exporting such a conception of Islam. Moreover, official state actors like the Qatar Foundation or individuals like Hamad Bin Khalifah or his former Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Hamad Bin Jassim, have no history of promoting what may be termed Wahhabi or Salafi values. Indeed, the opposite is true. Universal education, social equality, and tolerance have been the by-words of the Qatar Foundation while the Foreign Ministry or the two Hamads may be intimately associated with clearly seeking to maximise profits or extend influence among key elites around the world; none of which can easily be seen to fit into the Wahhabi or Salafi lexicon.

When seeking to extend influence in the Arab World, for example, there are scarcely any reputable examples of an organ of the Qatari state using Qatar's intrinsic Wahhabi or Salafi connections. Instead, Muslim Brotherhood connections are often used. In this context, it may be possible to see Qatar's elite using the Brotherhood because of their religious persuasion, but only as far as they are not Salafis. Either way, the Brotherhood are, once more, employed in a tactical sense by the Qatari elite.

### International

The international level facilitated key tactical concerns that allowed Qatar to engage as it did during the Arab Spring. Without the Spring the Arab League would never have supported a NATO-led action against an Arab country and without the Arab League sanctioning of such action, Qatar and the UAE could never have acted as they did. Qatar, a country with no history of aggressive 'regime changing' policies, would not have sent planes

and supported the removal of Colonel Gaddafi as stridently without this overarching narrative.

Indeed, it took the Arab Spring, one of the most powerful revolutionary movements to sweep across the Arab world, to provide the prompt and the opportunity for Qatar to change some of its central foreign policy tenets. As noted in various studies of Qatar's mediation the notion of relative neutrality was of central importance.[739] This logic made sense for a small country wanting to mediate in conflicts. Yet with actions in Libya and then Syria any notion that Qatar is a 'neutral' state is gone forever; from now on it will be seen as a state with definite interests that it supports.

Qatar's support in the post-Spring countries has often been funnelled through Muslim Brotherhood contacts, which has cemented the notion of Qatar having definite 'favourite' actors that it supports. There is little doubt that across the spectrum in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Gaza, and to some extent in Syria, Qatar supported those closely aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood, nor does Qatar deny that it supports various groups around the region.

The reasons for Qatar supporting the Muslim Brotherhood are varied. Part of the answer lies in the international realm with Qatar wanting to support a key emerging actor in the Middle East. Qatar's foreign policy is all about making itself important to as wide a range of important actors as possible. In the Brotherhood there is emerging a new force in Middle Eastern politics that will be important for generations. Given the large numbers nominally affiliated to the Brotherhood and the fact that it has been a bona fide organisation for nearly a century, it has the capacity to organise and mobilise its support. Crucially this is opposed to the ad hoc coming together of youth actors, secular supporters, and others that instigated the Arab Spring uprisings, who struggle to form a coherent, structured grouping. Indeed, Qatar is left with little alternative but to support the Brotherhood if it wants to try to curry favour with a group that has any power.

This is a logical approach and may accurately represent the thinking of the Qatari elite, but it is not the whole story. As noted, Qatar is a country that runs on personal contacts where

[739] Roberts, "Qatari Mediation," p.21.
Kamrava, "Mediation and Qatari Foreign Policy," p.543.

the elite is of critical importance in directing policy as they see fit. Qatar's centuries-old policy of hosting a range of exiles from across the Arab World and beyond has been of central importance during the Arab Spring. In the case of the Libyan conflict Dr Ali Al Salabi remained an influential cleric in Libya despite residing in Doha for over a decade. Ali's brother, Ismael, was the leader of a Qatar-backed militia the 'February 17 Khatiba.'[740] One of the most prominent rebel commanders, Abdulkarim Belhaj, is linked strongly to Ali Al Salabi too.[741] Yet Qatar's links are not exclusively to Islamists. The secular Mahmud Shammam is another Libyan exile who has been a frequent visitor to Doha in recent years and sat on the board of Al Jazeera. He was chosen to lead the Qatar-backed 'Libya' TV station in mid-2011 that broadcast from Doha.[742] Otherwise in the North African context, it is important to note Yusuf Al Qaradawi, the Muslim Brotherhood's most influential ideologue who has been based in Qatar since 1962. His regular TV show on Al Jazeera has been important in boosting his popularity and authority in recent years. The former founder of the Islamist group the FLN, Abbasi Al Madani, has been exiled in Doha since 2003 alongside Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya the former Mauritanian Prime Minister and President who arrived in Doha on 22 August 2005.[743]

Qatar's association with and support of Mahmud Shammam and a wider view of Qatar including its orientation with the Qatar Foundation and its investments indicates that while Qatar is supporting the Muslim Brotherhood, it is not out of stringent ideological alignment but out of an appreciation of realpolitik. Indeed, there is little discernible affinity within Qatar for the Brotherhood and Qatar's place as a Wahhabi country is unquestioned; witness the naming of Qatar's national mosque the Muhammad Ibn Abdul Al Wahhab mosque in late 2011. Just as Qatar is shoring up its regional Salafi-Wahhabi roots in Saudi Arabia with the naming of the State Mosque, so too Qatar is attempting to firm up a wider Muslim Brotherhood constituency with its wide-spread support.

[740] "Qatar and Libya Open a New Geopolitical Axis in North Africa," p.3.
[741] Peter Beaumont, "Qatar Accused of Interfearing in Libyan Affairs," *The Guardian* 04 October 2011.
"Pygmy with the Punch of a Giant," *The Eonomist* 05 November 2011.
Tony Karon, "Does Qatar Share the West's Agenda in Linya," *Time Magazine* 05 October 2011.
[742] Blake Houndhell, "The Revolution Will Soon Be Televised," *Foreign Policy*(28 March 2011)
[743] "Ould Al Taya Arrives in Doha Joining Other Exiles," in *Cablegate* (Wikileaks, 24 August 2005).

# Chapter 5: Conclusion

This analysis set out to delineate and explain the origin and nature of significant changes in a range of Qatari policies that emerged as the 1990s progressed. Most of these changes were in the realm of foreign policy.

Qatar's history was examined in order to contextualise the more recent policies. Such a historically-based understanding of Qatar confirms the underlying hypothesis that from the early 1990s there emerged a number of policies that were quantitatively and qualitatively different from their predecessors. Despite the apparent 'newness' of many of these policies, they are often aimed at the same concerns that have always plagued Qatar's leaders but the new elite merely adopted new tactics to answer existing strategic concerns.

In order to understand why these new tactics were undertaken it is first important to grasp their context. The first section of the conclusion will explain the enduring importance of the ruling elite and more importantly their scope of action as curtailed or facilitated by a range of domestic, regional, and international factors. This leads to the second section highlighting the persistent strategic concerns, which inevitably stem directly from the regional environment (there are many things that a country can change, but its location is not one of them).

Just as the regional level provides some continuity for Qatar, even if it is continuity of threat, the changing international system is one of the new features highlighted in the third section of the conclusion as providing new strategic challenges and opportunities for Qatar. Similarly, a new appreciation of the need to foster a post-hydrocarbon economy, the knock-on effects of plumbing the North Field, and a growing understanding of the importance of foreign policies reflecting positively domestically are also examined.

The last section will focus on the Arab Spring and on the efficacy of Qatar's strategy to date and going forward. The Arab Spring merits a section by itself but far from being a complete change in Qatari Foreign Policy as is often noted it actually highlights continuity in strategy just using different tactics. This change in tactics has important ramifications for a holistic examination of the effectiveness of Qatar's foreign policies going forward.

## Facilitating the Elite

Qatar's decision making remains dominated by a small section of the elite. While this is not new it introduces an uncertain element into the dynamic. While all Qatari leaders react to broadly the same sets of issues, they do so with different intrinsic proclivities and preferences. Indeed, few would disagree that the Qatari elite that took over from the late 1980s onwards were quite unique. Lest anyone forget, Qatar is not the only small, rich country in the Gulf; there are various other leaders that could have engaged in the types of policies that Hamad Bin Khalifah did. Yet nowhere is there as systematic and as progressive a set of policies as in Qatar. Moreover, these policies did not originate organically from the Qatari milieu; they reflect the interests of the elite.

The intrinsic orientation of the Emir and his key advisors (inward or outward looking), their innate approach to contemporary concerns like modernisation (to be resisted or embraced), and their conception for the future of their country (as a local, regional and/or international power) was always going to play a significant role. Such initial conclusions mirror those of Ehteshami and Hinnebusch who suggest that the flow of the contemporary world will prioritise the domestic determinants as increasingly important factors in determining foreign policy.

Yet as dynamic and innovative as Hamad Bin Khalifah Al Thani and his coterie of advisors have been, they could never have had as much of an impact without a variety of facilitating variables. Aside from the blind luck of possessing such a large gas field, Qatar needed the LNG market to be receptive to their overtures for finance in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Equally the elite benefitted from a quiescent public that rarely sought to curb the state's atypical and controversial policies. A combination of societal conservatism, improving socioeconomic conditions, trust in the leadership, and an ability to affect domestic policy when enough Qataris were sufficiently roused meant that the elite had unusual freedom to undertake policies particularly in the realm of foreign policy. Externally too Qatar had unusual freedom as it was initially seen by many as an honest broker without predetermined interests. When Qatar was undoing its reputation as a 'neutral' arbiter during the Arab Spring its actions were facilitated by its historic policy of hosting exiles, many of whom became Qatar's key conduits for information and for channelling support.

Aside from these Qatar-centric opportunities, timing was also crucial in explaining Qatar's shifting priorities. The ending of the Iran-Iraq War, the swift US-led reaction to the invasion of Kuwait, and the subsequent stationing of US troops in the Gulf allowed investment in Qatar to be contemplated and insurance premiums to be lowered. For Qatar, the invasion of Kuwait recast its own predicament galvanising existing desires to reorient its foreign relations, while the end of the Cold War unshackled small states from the polarising doctrine of super-power alignment or non-alignment.

Moreover, removing the clamp of the Cold War sparked latent conflicts around the world and created a target rich environment for now more unencumbered small states to potentially act as mediators. The immediate post-Cold War euphoria, the presumed triumph of the capitalist method, and the surge in popularity of neoliberal institutionalism particularly in terms of collective security and notions of reciprocity was the amniotic fluid for Qatar's emergence on the international stage. Notions deeply associated with this era – collective defence, the prominence of international trade, a desire to broaden diplomatic contacts and dialogue – are shot through Qatar's subsequent international relations and remain a consistent feature of the ruling elite's policies. Specifically delineating the lines of causation and correlation – whether the elite were already of this mind or were persuaded to adopt some of these key notions – is difficult to say, but the similarities between Qatar's shifting approaches and the new era's features are undeniable.

## Perennial Concerns

### A Saudi Threat

Throughout Qatar's history there has usually been a threat emanating from modern-day Saudi Arabia. Highlighting the importance of the personal inclinations of the leader, Emir Khalifah Bin Hamad Al Thani's (r.1972-1995) personal affinity with the Kingdom's rulers led to a discernible closening of relations against the backdrop of a mutually-agreed protective understanding. This was something of an ahistorical policy, for Qatar's default position was far from acquiescent and typically involved attempts to diversify their dependency on Saudi Arabia (as extensively noted in Chapter 3), something there is negligible evidence of Emir Khalifah Bin Hamad attempting to do. Not only did Khalifah Bin Hamad's Qatar devoutly follow Saudi Arabia throughout the seventies and eighties, but this relationship reinforced Riyadh's intrinsic belief of its role as the father figure in the Arabian Peninsula and a consequently diminutive role for Qatar.

Against this backdrop, not to mention the culture of the region stipulating deference to elders and the deep conservatism of glacially slow political change, the emergence of the new Qatari elite was jarring. Slowly taking power from the mid-1980s, the young elite in Qatar wanted to change tack significantly; something that found no favour in Riyadh. Going beyond the détente of the time, Qatar sought to normalise relations with Iran and entered negotiations with Israel. While these relations were undertaken to a large degree as ways to engage America, both policies fit snugly with Qatar's subsequent orientation and indicated Qatar's growing independence from Riyadh. Indeed, the symbolism of these two new relationships is important. For a country that was largely unknown and that had previously mostly subsumed any vestiges of an independent international personality under Saudi Arabia's auspices, such policies worked to differentiate Qatar.

In the face of plummeting relations and increasing border tensions, as Hamad Bin Khalifah himself noted, Qatar had no choice but to seek new protective arrangements. Just as his forebears did throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when faced with escalating tensions that cannot be controlled, an external guarantor was sought. In this case it was not the Sultan of Muscat, the Al Khalifah in Bahrain, the Ottomans, or the British but the power of the age, the United States. While worsening Saudi relations were not the only

reason for Qatar seeking the US security umbrella, they were of paramount immediate importance. While subsequent defensive agreements with the UK and France closely mirrored the tenor of historic relations in seeking to relieve the acute dependency on any one guarantor, the reality remained that America was by far the most important ally. Nevertheless, by pursuing this diversification of dependence from an external guarantor (America) and seeking as much autonomy as possible from regional powers (Saudi Arabia) Hamad Bin Khalifah's policies were a reversion to the Qatari norm.

With America in place, Saudi Arabia still loomed large and relations worsened with the border conflicts in the early 1990s and the 1995 coup and subsequent counter coups. Qatar's determined desire to publicise itself to further differentiate itself on an international stage can be seen in part as a reaction against Saudi Arabia's regional overbearance and belligerency. Establishing and propagating a progressive and popular brand using sport, the MICE industry, and high profile cultural initiatives increased rapidly as Qatar's finance allowed. Had Hamad Bin Khalifah followed the Saudi line he would never have entrusted control of the Qatar Foundation, the multi-billion dollar engine of social and educational change in Qatar to his wife, enfranchised women, or sat in an American TV interview with her. That these policies were so antithetical to anything that Saudi Arabia could have come up with is a part of why they were pursued.

Al Jazeera was also a key part of this push. Not only did it publicise Qatar effectively but it was a potential mechanism for Qatar to alert the wider region if belligerency continued. Outmatched on key fronts (financially, politically, and militarily) Al Jazeera was a savvy asymmetric policy to exponentially increase one arm of Qatar's defences. Whether this was purely in terms of deterrence or for more active defence by stirring up controversy about the Kingdom (or any other state), establishing the satellite channel was a shrewd move that gave Qatar an outsized ability to hit back.

Lastly, a direct consequence of Saudi Arabia blocking any putative intra-GCC pipe network was that Qatar was forced to pursue extra-GCC gas schemes, namely LNG. While this decision reflected the new elite's ideas about securing wider relationships and would likely have been undertaken in due course regardless, that it was undertaken so early was a direct corollary of Saudi's obstructionism.

## Regional Dynamics

No discussion of Qatar and its regional influences can pass without a strong emphasis on Kuwait's invasion as a key catalyst. The comparisons in size, orientation, power, location, and wealth have been made repeatedly between Qatar and Kuwait for good reason. The invasion of Kuwait was shocking for the region and amounted to the confirmation that black swan events do happen. After Kuwait's destruction it was obligatory for Qatar to secure, by whatever means it could, external protection guarantees.

Regional competition from the similar city-states of Manama, Dubai, and Abu Dhabi is also discernible as a driver of Qatari policy. Aside from perennial elite competition and the desire among Royals that have known each other for decades to out-do the other, in an era when all states are vying to diversify their economies and attract talent and investment, having an edge or a particular niche is key. In this context it is possible to see various Qatari policies as forming, spreading, and embedding a brand for the country. This brand is designed primarily to boost Qatar's visibility as an attractive state for international business against the backdrop of the relatively homogenised appearance of the Gulf States. To a Qatari or an Emirati the differences may be obvious, but not necessarily to a European-based decision maker who could well struggle to tell Doha apart from Abu Dhabi. Whatever Qatar can do to differentiate itself positively from its regional rivals through creating and spreading a unique brand is an understandable and necessary ploy.

Remembering that for Nye soft power emanates from espoused values, like the promotion of Al Jazeera and of modern education, Qatar's mediation also contributes to the brand by creating a positive image of Qatar as a state pursuing dialogue and peace. Yet the mediation can also be seen as a tactical policy to calm tensions in areas of critical interest to Qatar. For example, even though Qatar failed with its mediations in Yemen, the fact that it sought to intervene and calm one section of Yemen's troubles with the Houthis could be seen straightforwardly as a self-interested attempt to boost Qatar's immediate security arena. Equally, considering the Iranian dimension in Yemen with the long-suspected but unproven links between the Houthis and Iran, a Qatari desire to prevent the implosion of the state which could allow Iranian-backed forces to exploit the instability would also be logical.

It is a similar issue in Darfur. Aside from notions of Qatar seeking to build relations with a view to future agribusiness opportunities, Qatar's intervention can be understood as part of a plan to preserve influence with the Sudanese Government as Iran seeks to boost ties in the region.

In the Lebanese mediation in 2008 there is a more direct Iranian link via Hezbollah. Qatar's role on this occasion was to make *de jure* the *de facto* realities on the ground. While this may be seen as Qatar helping the 'Iranian axis' it is equally plausible to see this as Qatar being realistic and preventing an escalation that could further undermine the power of the Lebanese state and allow Hezbollah to exploit any resulting turmoil.

## New Concerns

### The North Field

While the North Field made Qatar the richest country on earth, as Qatar increased its dependence on the field, its vulnerability to Iran inevitably increased. This dynamic mandated a new approach and it is no coincidence that Qatar improved its relations with Iran at the same time as it was corralling interest and investment in the North Field project. Qatar could not just hope that Iran chose not to interfere and it could certainly not continue the sporadically aggressive anti-Iranian policies of the 1980s of its GCC neighbours. The numerous bilateral visits, the water-piping deal and subsequent examples of Qatar's atypical desire as a Sunni, GCC state to occasionally protect Iranian interests and boost relations with the Islamic Republic are all primarily consequences of Qatar's development of the North Field.

While Qatar was eager to augment relations with Iran, it did not do so naively. Well aware of Kuwait's experience trying to placate an irascible larger neighbour on its border, neither having any meaningful indigenous military capability nor was relying on the moribund GCC Peninsula Shield an option, instead Qatar was forced to find external guarantees. Not only were they crucial in boosting international confidence in financing the project but Qatar needed a hard security element somewhere if it was not to remain vulnerable to Iran. Claiming (as Iraq had just done with Kuwait) that Qatar was 'stealing its resources' would have been a false but plausible charge for the Iranians to make given the contiguous border

and the comparatively quick rate at which Qatar would extract the gas with Western technology.

Once the basic security of the field was secured, accruing a diverse array of international alliances and trading partners was not only sensible commercially, but it is the epitome of the post-Cold War neoliberal ethos as it tied Qatar into world trade. A certain security comes with such interconnectedness in direct ways. If Iran had interfered with Qatar's field in 2011, for example, the supply for Belgium, China, France, India, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Spain, Taiwan, the UK and the US, each of whom imported over 2000 million cubic meters of LNG from Qatar that year, could have been jeopardised, while smaller LNG supplies to Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Kuwait, Greece, and Mexico could also have been disrupted.[744] This list includes four permanent members of the UN Security Council and two non-permanent members at the time (Brazil and India). Such close international ties are an inevitable result of Qatar's prodigious LNG supplies and the need for markets, as well as the very encapsulation of the foreign policy thrust to enhance Qatar's security by enmeshing Qatar into the energy nexus of many of the world's most influential countries.

### A Post-Hydrocarbon Future

Frequently and unambiguously referred to by the elite in Qatar, enshrined in the Qatar Vision 2030, explicitly found in the deep changes wrought across the education system, embodied in Education City, and an implicit ribbon running throughout many of the newer Qatari policies, striving to create a knowledge economy and commerce-based post-hydrocarbon future for Qatar is a central goal of state.

While economic diversification has nominally been a concern of Qatar's elite for decades and various industrial plants were constructed towards this end, the progress made by Hamad Bin Khalifah's predecessors was meagre. Partly this is due to the fact that there was nothing like the financial surplus available to his predecessors with which to enact expensive policies aimed at securing the post-hydrocarbon future. But equally the specific influence of Hamad Bin Khalifah and his close allies is crucial. The central driving force pursuing this goal stems from an elite a generation younger than most of their peers across the Middle East

[744] "Natural Gas Information," p.II.57.

when they came to power. Within this elite was the powerful guiding force of Sheikha Moza Bint Nasser Al Misnad who had the latitude and trust of the Emir, the financial backing of LNG, and the relatively acquiescent domestic social milieu to push-through her radical educational vision.

The project to boost Qatar's future economy is a constant cycle of self-reinforcing industries and strategies, which can be best understood as disparate policies coming together to create and propagate a central business-savvy, progressive, and attractive brand for Qatar. The MICE industry directly seeks to create economic diversification and to eventually begin a self-sustaining new sector of the economy, while leading the international push to boost Qatar's international image. A significant focus on sport and cultural gambits is part of the same package designed to boost Qatar's attractiveness for visitors and businesses alike. It is intended that Education City will feed top graduates into Qatar's nascent industries or into research under the QF's Science and Technology Park (QSTP), which is itself explicitly designed to attract foreign research and design. Qatar's investments often have an element of human resource building about them. Investments in top-flight companies can come with an agreement to open the regional headquarters in Doha or to open an office in the Qatar Financial Centre (QFC). This contributes to creating a critical mass in finance in Qatar which it is hoped will eventually act as a self-sustaining part of Qatar's economic diversification and further boost Qatar's brand as a regional hub for commerce.

## All Politics is Domestic

Various new policies in Qatar can be readily interpreted as playing to a domestic audience, such as promotion of sport, culture, and the founding of world-class education institutions in Doha. At times, Qatar has also been popular abroad as demonstrated in Beirut in 2008 and, more recently, in Benghazi in 2011 with people waving Qatari flags thanking the state for its support. Such examples resonate well in Doha with Qataris pleased that their country is for the first time developing a good reputation in certain quarters of the wider region. While there are those who grumble as to the money that Qatar is spending on these foreign adventures or the 'Western' influence particularly in the educational sphere, nothing approaching a widespread movement critical of Hamad Bin Khalifah and his rule emerged.

There are also more subtle effects to note, particularly in terms of the country branding. Qatar's struggle to positively differentiate itself from its regional neighbours because of its relative lack of the typical building-blocks of statehood (romantic struggle for independence, unique characteristics of state, etc.) is compounded by the homogenising globalised forces of international commerce and weakening of national borders. Moreover, as Cerny notes, the desire to compete internationally and all that entails undermines the creation of a particular and unique *Gemeinschaft* further retarding efforts to create and maintain a unique national identity. In this light Qatar's burgeoning country brand acts not only to differentiate Qatar for the external audience, but for the internal one too.

This is not to say that Qataris did not know who they were or how they were different from Emiratis before branding efforts were undertaken, but that in this era of rapid change the mechanics of the 'invention of tradition' have come to the fore, as Hobsbawm notes.

> We should expect it [the invention of tradition] to occur more frequently when a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which 'old' traditions had been designed, producing new ones to which they were not applicable, or when such traditions and their institutional carriers and promulgators no longer prove sufficiently adaptable and flexible, or are otherwise eliminated.[745]

Given these pressures it is normal for national identity to evolve. The understanding of what it means to be Qatari is being consistently fleshed out and the differences extenuated with the adoption of newer policies. Branding is the central tool used by the state to create, tweak, and embed an evolving national identity in Qatar.

## An International Perspective

Few would deny that states have become closer and increasingly homogenized over recent decades driven in large part by international commerce, travel, and the exponential increase in communication technologies. In response, the Qatari elite has striven to transform Doha into an internationally recognised hub for finance, aviation, education, research, sport, and culture. While some of these strategies have been more successful than others, the sum

[745] Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010 (19th printing)), p.4-5.

total of them means that Qatar has kept itself at the forefront of the phenomenon of globalisation.

This is a savvy economic policy but the process has drawbacks. The huge influx of foreigners, a direct corollary of Qatar's pursuit of its central place in these global industries, is the clearest example of the effect of the chase on Qatar. Qataris are a minority in their own homeland and English is the lingua-franca across business. These factors and others like them provide challenges to Qatar's identity. Some of the answers to these questions are answered (at least in part) by Qatar's country brand, which aims to resonate both internally and externally.

As much as the international arena has provided challenges to Qatar, it is nevertheless the plane on which Qatar increasingly operates. As described in detail at the start of the conclusion, the international arena fundamentally facilitated Qatar's orientation and specific policies. Moreover, on a more practical basis without America's security umbrella Qatar could not be the prominent actor that it is today. Far more so than with previous regimes, the current Qatari elite see Qatar's future inextricably tied up with international actors. Security guarantees tie-in key international actors to Qatar. Becoming such a large energy trader means that Qatar is of crucial importance to many of the world's most important states. Prodigious investment makes Qatar one of the world's most prominent players in international finance and commerce. The apparent desire to make Qatar a central interlocutor between the international community and a range of Muslim groups that Western States often have difficulty speaking to or understanding (for example, the Taliban, Hamas, Hezbollah, Darfur's militias, and the Muslim Brotherhood) gives Qatar a privileged position. Similarly, Qatar's internationally-recognized tertiary education system puts Qatar decades ahead of its regional rivals, positioning Qatar as the region's most progressive state clearly signalling Qatar's international orientation.

## The Arab Spring

Never before has Qatar sought to unseat regional leaders or so overtly support one side in a given conflict or post-conflict situation. However, while the tactics have changed, the strategic aims have not. Before the Spring the fundamental aim of foreign policy was to

make Qatar centrally important to as wide an array of important actors as possible and this is exactly the aim of Qatar's policies during the Spring.

Despite sporadic instances of positive relations with Libya's former dictator Colonel Gaddafi, such as facilitating the release of the Bulgarian Nurses in 2007 or the Lockerbie Bomber Abdelbaset Al Megrahi in 2009, Qatar-Libyan relations were fundamentally brittle. Indeed, when a leader as unstable and undiplomatic as Colonel Gaddafi was in power the foundation for a serious, long-term relationship just was not present. In Egypt the animosity with Qatar ran deeper. Partly this stemmed from President Mubarak's dislike of Al Jazeera but more importantly he bitterly resented Qatar's attempts to intervene in Darfur, an area that was firmly considered to be Egypt's 'back yard'. While there was something of a rapprochement just before the start of the Arab Spring, Egypt under Mubarak could never have been a solid, dependable ally for Qatar.

Egypt is of central importance in the Arab world and the Spring presented an opportunity for Qatar to remake its relationship. Primarily using its contacts with and support for the Muslim Brotherhood, Qatar immediately established itself first in line to financially and rhetorically aid the nascent new regime in Cairo. In the same way that Qatar has sought to actively engage and make itself important to America (bases), the UK (gas trade and investment), France (investment and trade), Germany (investment), China (energy trade), Japan (energy trade), and South Korea (energy trade), it is doing the same with Egypt.

An important by-product of establishing these relationships is the principle of reciprocity. In a low probability, high impact eventuality (natural disaster, industrial accident, war, etc.) Qatar will feel that it can call on its allies to offer support. This was clearly expressed by Hamad Bin Jassem Al Thani when speaking to a visiting US dignitary. After being thanked for Qatar's $100 million donation in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Hamad Bin Jassem replied "we may have our own Katrina someday."[746] Whether this potential future support is rhetorical, material, military, political, or diplomatic, for a small state in a perilous region, Qatar can never have too much. Taking the example of Iranian aggression, Qatar's array of international allies could potentially provide it with extra anti-mining capability (from

[746] Roula Khalaf and Camilla Hall, "Middle East: Here, There and Everywhere," *The Financial Times* 18 March 2013.

Western allies), economic pressure (from consumers of Iran's oil and gas, Japan and China), supporting votes in forums like the UN Security Council or the Arab League (in addition to the permanent members, South Korea is a non-permanent member until 2014), or the rhetorical support of Muslim Brothers across the region.

Aside from such plausible if speculative supposition, Qatar positioned itself to be well placed to reap economic benefits in the new Egypt. Qatar sought to establish a privileged position under Egyptian law as it did in France when it secured an exemption from capital gains tax in 2009.[747] Even without such direct benefits, Qatar hoped that its weekly interaction with Egypt's elite would give Qatar an advantage on any prime investment opportunities and allow them to drive a hard bargain. Politically and diplomatically, aside from counting on President Morsi's support in regional forums, Qatar hoped for Egyptian support for its policies in Darfur and Gaza.

While Qatar may benefit from the Arab Spring geopolitically, it would be remiss to omit the personal element in influencing Qatar's policies during the Arab Spring protests. More than most Arab Countries, Qatar is run in a personalised manner and the Emir's decision is final and uncontested. The evidence of Hamad Bin Khalifah's two decades in power highlights his role as the archetypal benevolent dictator. Benevolent in that part of the rationale for undertaking various policies can be described as enlightened (educational improvement along Western lines, banning of press censorship, promotion of significant state-run charities, a desire to offer mediation services, etc.), and dictatorial in that the Qatari Parliament has no meaningful powers.

This is not to say that Qatar has a perfect record. From the Qatari poet who was jailed in 2012 for writing and spreading offensive poems about Hamad Bin Khalifah and his family to noble initiatives that were started (notably the Doha Centre for Media Freedom) but failed to live up to their promise, there are causes for concern. Indeed, it would be foolish to suggest that Qatar operated an altruistic policy during the Arab Spring (or in other examples) for there are numerous other political motivations afoot. Yet equally it would be

[747] Patrick Roger, "La France Accorde Une Exoneration D'impots Aux Avoirs De Qatar," *Le Monde* 23 February 2009.

wrong to ignore the evidence of the progressive tenor of many of Qatar's policies to date that is informed by the personal politics of those in power.

Qatar's policy towards Syria in the Arab Spring offers more evidence of the importance of personal politics. Given how important Syria is as an ally to Iran, Qatar seeking to oust President Al Assad is likely to be taken poorly in Tehran where it could be viewed as Qatar joining the clichéd Sunni GCC mentality of trying to undermine Iran's security whenever possible. Just as Qatar refrained from acting in Bahrain for fear of antagonising Saudi Arabia, so too it would have been natural to have expected Qatar to do the same in Syria out of concern to maintain good relations with Iran.

Empirically speaking the threat from Iran has not changed; it still has its Revolutionary Guards and the ability to severely impinge upon Qatar if it so chose. Qatar's defences in terms of American and other Western allies are significant, while its own domestic defences, notably its National Security Shield are, while new and untested, potentially effective. Nevertheless, given Iran's asymmetric threat, Qatar's complete lack of strategic depth and that fact that the economic future of Qatar is invested in a small number of locations, Qatar continues to be threatened by Iran. Therefore, Qatar's intervention in Syria is surprising and the key factor must either be that the Hamad Bin Khalifah personally does not believe that Iran poses a credible threat or he has enough confidence in his long-term relationship with Tehran so that he can undercut Iran's key ally without any serious repercussions. Equally, the Hamad Bin Khalifah could feel that the political and humanitarian concerns in Syria are so acute that it is worth the risk. Whatever the reason, it is clear that in Qatar's policy towards Syria, the personal element is of unusual importance.

Overall, the reasons for Qatar's entrance to the Arab Spring are a mix of personal impetus and geopolitical calculation, but the fact remains that the motivation is irrelevant compared with the opportunity to intervene. First and foremost Qatar needed a heady confluence of domestic, regional, and international factors unique to Qatar and the precise moment in history that facilitated the elite and allowed Qatar to play such a decisive role in the Spring.

## Qatar's Search for Security

Age-old problems stemming primarily from Qatar's immediate region continue to vex Qatar's leaders as they did centuries ago. The answer of former leaders of seeking external

guarantors and developing ways to diversify dependency upon them is still the same broad tactic pursued today. However, infinitely greater domestic financial capacity and an unusually progressive leadership since 1995, has resulted in atypical and innovative solutions to Qatar's concerns, which is combined with a profoundly new international system with different limits and norms. Qatar's prodigious financial power is impressive as is its ever-growing diplomatic clout. But money can only buy so much influence and Qatar's frenetic diplomatic activity in recent decades is not yet institutionalised and remains personalised.

The lesson of Kuwait's pre-invasion foreign policy is that while you can rent a friendship or an alliance, you cannot buy one. Qatar's economic diplomacy after the Arab Spring may net Qatar some prime investment opportunities, but should not be seen as the establishment of new, concrete alliances or the start of a new era of importance for Qatar internationally. Moreover, never before has Qatar antagonised such a large number of different interests. Given the febrile nature of politics in the Middle East as the Arab Spring progresses, political battles are being increasingly framed as if for the very souls of the countries involved. Bitterness is extreme and in the zero-sum world of 'them' and 'us' Qatar is increasingly seen as supporting groups like the Brotherhood as partisans. Aside from haemorrhaging support from non-Brotherhood followers, Qatar needs to avoid being seen as purely supporting Brotherhood elites, who - given the nature of revolutions - are destined to struggle in the coming decades. It matters little that there are few coherent non-Brotherhood parties and organisations that Qatar could support; it is the perception that matters.

Such concerns are not confined to the Middle East. In France, Qatar was baffled by the vociferous reaction of the left and right-wing press when Qatar tried to launch a €50 million investment fund to reinvigorate Paris' Muslim-dominated suburbs.[748] The fact that the Qatari elite manifestly had no Machiavellian plots to promote any particular strain of Islam or to coax support from the troubled minorities is irrelevant; again, Qatar needs to understand how it will be perceived.

[748] Roberts, "Qatar's Flowering Relationship with Paris".

The personalised nature of politics in Qatar and its foreign policy is both a blessing and a curse. Quick to make decisions and to establish relations with the worlds political and financial elite, shrewd negotiation can secure for Qatar strategic relationships and gilt-edged opportunities. Equally, it can mean that Qatar's relations are tied specifically to certain leaders and when they are removed from office, Qatar struggles to restart relations as happened in France with the change from President Sarkozy to President Hollande.

Another issue is the detrimental degree to which decisions are made only at the very highest levels of the Qatari elite. This means that Qatar's policy is worryingly dependent upon two or three individuals giving Qatar as a country little strategic depth or institutional back-up capability. The personalised nature of politics marginalises the structures that are there to inform and support decision making. This cycle is exacerbated by Qatar's youth as a country which means it has only had a meaningful bureaucracy for a generation. Otherwise, every Ministry and company suffers from a chronic shortage of talented, hard-working Qataris; partly the result of having such a small population and partly due to a lack of motivation caused by pay disparities between sectors that plague all Gulf States. Yet, even if the Qatari institutions were in efficient working order, cultural issues hamper their effectiveness.

Consider Qatar's decision to actively support the ousting of Colonel Gaddafi in Libya, which was an entirely new policy direction. While in hindsight the Libyan Revolution proceeded relatively swiftly and painlessly, this was far from certain at the beginning. Nor was anyone confident that the country's riven tribal politics, which Gaddafi had been stoking and manipulating for generations would not simply implode without Gaddafi keeping the tensions in check. Also from Qatar's own perspective, intervention in Libya was a risky move. Colonel Gaddafi was one of the world's most unpredictable leaders: he had a history of directly supporting terrorism, seeking weapons of mass destruction, and had huge funds at his disposal. It is little wonder that Qataris in Spain during the early months of the Revolution insisted to all that they were Omani, for fear of some kind of Gaddafi-sponsored reprisal.

A wide range of Ambassadors and diplomats in Doha suggest that there is no evidence that the Qatari authorities undertook a systematic, rigorous, and meticulous risk assessment of

their policy. Moreover, had a Ministry undertaken such a study, it is difficult to imagine it presenting findings critical of the Emir's choice to intervene. Doubtless the pros and cons of aiding the anti-Gaddafi forces were discussed at length at the Emir's Majlis and with key Government contacts, but such a process is far from systematic. This kind of an ad hoc approach is one thing when Qatar is operating in the Gulf region or otherwise on matters of lesser importance but ousting vicious dictators like Colonel Gaddafi and President Assad is quite different.

Given the lack of evidence of a rigorous risk assessment when undertaking such potentially dangerous policies, it is prudent to ask if Qatar's history of reliance on external powers for security has removed an element of caution from the calculations of the elite. Now more than ever with the greatest military power in history encamped in Qatar, the elite must guard against a complacency that could overly embolden policy without a careful consideration of the potential consequences of its actions out of a belief that American guarantees will perennially be enough.

Yet such pivotal decisions as Qatar made in the Arab Spring are unlikely to come up again. Not only is the Arab Spring a deeply unusual phenomenon, but neither Qatar's elite nor anyone else expects Qatar to continue to lead the Middle East's reaction to events. At some stage Riyadh, Cairo, and Baghdad will return to dominate the political landscape and by virtue of their natural disposition, importance, and influence resume their de facto leadership positions. Such a turn of events will benefit Qatar if it can make it to such a watershed moment without serious disruption.

Qatar needs to concentrate on sustainable areas of policy where it has a comparative advantage. The various fonts of Qatar's soft power - from Al Jazeera, to cultural and sporting policies, to education initiatives and MICE industry promotion - are as forward-thinking, economically-focused, and as sophisticated an answer as any regional state has found to counter the diverse and pressing problems of modernity. The goals these tactics aim for are enshrined in Qatar's wider 2030 National Vision. Qatar can never hope to compete in traditional metrics of power as it does not have the capacity. Yet if it can continue, for example, its model of education Qatar could be the America of the Gulf: a veritable hoover and font of regional educational excellence, training future elites for decades to come. Such

a notion is not farfetched and the plans and projects in place presently are peerless throughout the Middle East.

However, such policies need to be actively nurtured and carefully thought-through. Hosting world-level conferences is an impressive endeavour showcasing Qatar's importance and diplomatic clout. But organisers need to remember that these events are about more than just the 'show' of hosting the event. In the COP 18 conference, for example, there were concerns that Qatar did not have the capacity or ability to successful manage the difficult negotiating process.

Similarly, in terms of sporting events Qatar needs to brace itself for increasing waves of criticism from Western-based media in the run up to the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Sections of the English press in particular have made it clear that they are not happy that Qatar won the right to host the World Cup. Articles about how Qatar allegedly bribed its way to winning the contest and the inappropriateness of hosting a football tournament in Qatar's baking summer heat are published on a regular basis.[749] While negative press coverage may seem like a trivial matter, it must not be forgotten that part of the Qatari brand is not only designed to boost its popularity with business elites, Qatar also wants a wider positive reputation to attract human capital, a goal that such negative coverage could impair. As crude as Qatar's coverage is in the British press at times, it is not as bad as it has been in the French press in 2012 and 2013. Fuelled primarily by coverage of Qatar buying French companies and real estate (more of a sore point in left-leaning France that the UK) and worsened by the Paris suburb-investment fiasco, the coverage has created an atmosphere where incorrect stories of Qatar directly supporting Al Qaeda-type militants in Mali in 2012 and 2013 are taken as plausible and 'in keeping' with wider Qatari policy.[750] The concern is that if the French press' penchant for 'Qatar-bashing' does not subside, this could directly affect Qatar's goals such as investing in property or increasing its stake in French companies.

[749] Matt Dickinson, "Winter of Discontent Sure to Be Hot Topic," *The Times* 05 March 2013.
Matt Scott, "Millions Paid in Bribes for Qatar's 2022 World Cup Votes, Report Claims," *The Guardian* 10 May 2011.
"Fifa Turns Focus Back on Mohammed Bin Hammam Despite World Cup Concerns," *The Daily Telegraph* 18 September 2012.
[750] David B Roberts, "Is Qatar Sponsoring Al Qa'ida in Mali," *RUSI*(07 February 2013)

Qatar's role promoting freedom of expression and freedom of the press, personified in the form of Al Jazeera, though imperfect, was an immensely powerful tool that widely and effectively built a positive reputation for the Qatari state. While Al Jazeera has always had its detractors, with its actions in the Arab Spring it is no longer just governments complaining about the satellite channel but increasing numbers of ordinary Arabs. Increasingly seen as a stooge of the Qatari Government's support of the Muslim Brotherhood, on top of increasing competition, Al Jazeera's reputation is being hit as are its viewing numbers.

In part, Qatar needs to express its policies and its goals better. It is not a slavish, ideological supporter of the Brotherhood and it needs to actively divest itself of this label by overtly seeking greater balance in those it supports. While Qatar has built up support among the Brotherhood elites, this is an intrinsically fickle group; beyond finance and shaky notions of reciprocity there is no reason as to why the Brotherhood should continue to support Qatar. This relationship is not based on energy dependency or deep cultural and political links, but a temporary alignment of political and financial convenience. Given the difficulties inherent in recovering from a revolution, it is far from clear how long Morsi's Government will be in power or retain the faith of its Brotherhood supporters. Qatar could be left supporting an isolated, impotent, and ever more disliked elite while presiding over investments that are depreciating in value.

Qatar needs to revert to the central feature of its foreign policy evident since the late 18$^{th}$ century: balance. From the Utub paying a tribute to the Persians to protect them from the Sultan of Muscat in 1799 to Ahmed Bin Ali Al Thani refusing to acquiesce to RAF flyovers in the 1960s lest this tilt the impression of Qatar as overtly dependent on the British to supporting Israel and Hamas at the same time as supporting America and Iran, Qatar has always sought balance.

In the 2000s Al Jazeera was in its pomp, Qatar's large-scale mediation forays were underway, relations were on-going with Israel, Iranian relations showed fitful promise, and Qatar was speaking with all actors, favouring none. Qatar was seen as an enemy to no-one and a small state that had a dynamic, progressive, and inclusive vision for its place in the region. It was because of these types of relationships that Qatar was truly diversifying its

dependencies. Indeed, Qatar's continued integration into the energy nexus of an increasing array of international states, its increasing financial penetration across the world's key capitals, and its brand gaining increasing traction in business communities and populations alike were all positive signs of progress. Only by following this inoffensive path can Qatar assuage its core concerns.

Moreover, only by following such a trajectory can Qatar ever hope to escape the gilded cage of its protective relationships. If Qatar's history proves anything, it is that such relationships always end: America will leave at some stage. If Qatar is to avoid continually transitioning from one guarantor to another it cannot be a divisive state. Instead, facilitated by its popular brand, it must be able to rely on an ever thickening web of international relations, trade agreements, and financial deals uniquely provided by Qatar that make many of the most important international states interdependent upon Qatar's continued prosperity.

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