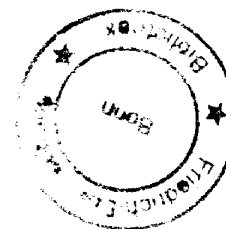


# THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN CIVILIZATIONS

*The UAE and Germany*

A 96 - 02077



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Published 1995  
Printed in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Al-Hassan, Yousef, ed.  
The dialogue between civilizations

Jordan Department of Libraries, Documentation and National Archives  
deposit number 826/8/1995

Publication of this volume was financed by:

Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Amman  
P.O. Box 926238  
Amman, Jordan

The opinions expressed in this book are those of the contributors and should not be construed as representing the view of ECDSR, the ECDSR Board of Trustees, or the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

Technical editing by B. Kay Neal  
Typeset and designed by Lori L.W. Santrisi  
Printed by The Economic Press Co.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

APOC	Anglo-Persian Oil Company
bpd	barrels per day
CDU	Christian Democratic Union of Germany
cf/d	cubic feet per day
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
Dh	dirham
DM	Deutschmark
ECDSR	Emirates Centre for Developmental and Strategic Research
EC	European Community
FDP	Free Democratic Party
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GCC	Gulf Co-operation Council
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNP	Gross national product
mbpd	million barrels per day
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEEC	Organization for European Economic Cooperation
SPD	Social Democratic Party of Germany
UAE	United Arab Emirates

*Note:* All quotations of the Qur'an are from *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary* by A. Yusuf Ali.

# INTRODUCTION

## THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN CIVILIZATIONS... WHY?

*Yousef Al-Hassan*

The world surrounding us is witnessing profound and rapid changes as a result of radical transformations occurring in the international environment, as well as in ideas, the economy and politics, and mass movements of population across borders and cultures. In the same way, we are living in an explosion of information and human knowledge, and at a time of rapid advances in communications technology, reflected in the extensive use of satellites, and television broadcasts that cross geographical borders in a way that may affect the values, ideas, customs and special characteristics of the various national cultures.

The world is also witnessing unprecedented qualitative transformations which call upon us to make extraordinary efforts to comprehend the current process of change, to identify the way in which human societies are developing, and to understand the transformations in their political systems and spiritual values as well as to understand and assimilate the profound revolution taking place in the fields of knowledge and technology.

This effort and this understanding require a scrutinizing and critical observation of a world where changes take place quickly, where cultural phenomena intertwine with political, economic and social crises and where international relations overlap, making mutual understanding and respect between the cultures of this world a pressing need.

It is doubtless that the exchange of points of view between intellectuals and researchers of Arab and other origins about cultural, political and social issues helps provide a basis for the understanding of civilizations and for their interaction. This interaction is essential for the process of shaping the future of the world and to prevent clashes in international cultural relations.

\* \* \*

Thus, we are encouraging here dialogue between cultures and civilizations instead of clash or conflict. This is a civilized tradition which has been undertaken between civilizations throughout the ages, in times of peace as well as in times of war and which has involved the victorious as well as the defeated. Each civilization is capable of dialogue, and desires at the same time to develop its values and individual cultural characteristics. Our Arab Islamic civilization might be the most audibly and effectively active in preaching the message of dialogue, especially considering the high esteem it has for reason, knowledge and freedom as it invites humanity to cooperation and understanding: "O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you..." (Qur'an, XLIX:13). This is the message of civilization.

Why is there an increasing need for dialogue between civilizations nowadays? The answer is obvious: humanity suffers from political and social crises, migration of population, large economic disparities, a declining natural resource base, continued destruction of the environment and a rise in the rate of violence and extremism. The world is witnessing unprecedented qualitative transformations, especially in the fields associated with the third technological revolution whose impact on values, relations, ideas and cultures is difficult to understand without reason and dialogue.

There are obvious difficulties involved in truly understanding the principles, relations, feelings, social structure and boundaries upon which culture is based, the way in which the meaning of these concepts changes over time and space and the extent to which their course is affected by external pressures and internal crises.

It is also feared that continued stereotyping of a given culture by another would feed mass hatred, particularly in societies where ignorance, bigotry and superstition are widespread, transforming diversity into conflict. Once conflict erupts, it could turn violent in the absence of dialogue and a *culture of dialogue* which values tolerance, respects the principle of the human being's dignity and freedom of choice and accepts diversity and multi-culturalism instead of imposing a "model" and insisting on hegemony.

\* \* \*

The dialogue between civilizations that we are seeking would prevent cultures from viewing one another through a broken mirror. Rather, it would be based upon belief in the oneness of human origins and upon the principles of mutual recognition and tolerance, while resisting racism and the denial of others. The dialogue we want emphasizes what is common and positive between cultures, admits the validity of all civilizations, and eliminates the siege mentality existing in some cultures.

The starting point for dialogue should be the readiness of each culture to understand the other, to avoid prejudice, to agree to re-shape the image of the other within a framework of tolerance and a common desire to shape human values so as to bring about cultural interaction. The facts of the new world community, which is based upon the production of information and its rapid, widespread dissemination which goes beyond geographical borders, could greatly contribute to achieving this.

Dialogue means as well to stop the process of absorption and annexation of cultures. It aims at *rationalizing* the behaviour of countries

within these cultures and at preventing the use of force in order to establish a dominant position. At the same time, the dialogue between cultures helps consolidate the primary feature of human cultures, namely their response to evolution and enrichment through the interaction occurring between them. Such dialogue also helps rationalize the conflicts which may erupt while cultural identities are being established, or which arise out of economic crises resulting from friction between the members of different cultures who cross the borders of their own cultures during waves of migration, or out of conflicts caused by illegal immigration and fuelled by political, ideological and historical differences.

Among the benefits and aims of dialogue is to avoid those situations characterized by fear, racism and xenophobia and to create a suitable atmosphere for the exchange of all that is beneficial in culture, knowledge and experience. The dialogue between civilizations includes not only exchange in the fields of culture, information, literature and the arts, but also in the fields of science and inventions. Otherwise, it would be a limited exchange indeed, paving the way for cultural domination, intellectual occupation and the elimination of other cultures.

Dialogue does not mean forgetting about or ignoring the differences between cultures. In fact, isolation from outside cultural influence is as difficult as subordination or dissolution. Thus, the call for dialogue is a call for tolerance and coexistence, a negation of conflicts aimed at establishing superiority and domination. It is an attitude related to future issues, an expression of the desire of modern civilizations to tackle these issues and of their belief in the necessity of cooperating to attain those aims.

\* \* \*

How can our Arab Islamic culture be presented to other cultures? How shall we present it as it is, with its negative and positive aspects, its crises, its times of regression, its unique achievements and its values? How shall we present its stand on issues of the future, ranging from human rights to peace, the environment, democracy, consultation (*shura*,

that is the ruler's consultation of the governed), development and ethics in dealing with others and in economic affairs, etc.?

First, it is essential to know one's reality and to explore its positive aspects as well as its weaknesses, to discover its existing capacities and its spiritual, intellectual, human and material possibilities, and to perceive the image of this essence as it is seen by other cultures. Next, it is necessary to put forward a rational understanding of our contemporary world, and this requires a clear answer to the so-called Islamic threat to Western Christian civilization, as well as the clarification of attitudes towards the so-called Western invasion of cultures and values of the societies belonging to the Muslim cultures, to define the limits of these dangers and to re-shape each other's image within a framework of cultural tolerance.

Arab Islamic culture is not unable to accommodate the contemporary world. It possesses experience and values of tolerance and the ability to interact and coexist with others. Arab Islamic culture forbids—by word or deed—violating the dignity of Man or dominating him. It has emphasized—as have other cultures—the fact that the dignity of people takes precedence over any association or identity they may have with a particular culture and the fact that Man has an unshakeable dignity, that the Creator has honoured him and made him His vicegerent on earth. The differences and conflicts between cultures must not be allowed to usurp the rights of various peoples, whether in regard to their dealings with each other or in regard to their right to exist.

Dialogue serves to prevent cultural sectarianism, and the responsibility falls upon the powers that be within civilizations, as these powers are the ones most qualified to create dialogue, secure its continuity, produce a positive interaction among the various parties to it, search for what the historian Arnold Toynbee called “positive spiritual purity”, remedy the imbalances in values, intellect and relations, and relinquish the conflicts aimed at achieving supremacy, domination and the denial of others.

## **THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN CIVILIZATIONS**

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The dialogue between cultures enables the world to appeal to reason and logic in all issues related to life, culture and existence. It urges Man to love learning, to apply himself to science, and to build up and develop the world in which he lives and bring about progress in order to give life real meaning so as to shape the century to come into a time of salvation, through shared human values.

## **I. BACKGROUND**

# 1

## GERMANY AND THE GULF BEFORE 1971

THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF A DISTANT RELATIONSHIP

*Frauke Heard-Bey*

Throughout antiquity and the Middle Ages the Gulf has been seen in Europe as a bridge between the Mediterranean-centred world and the almost unknown Far East. With the beginning of the age of discovery in the fifteenth century, the newly-found sea route around the Cape of Good Hope enabled the first European ships to sail to the Gulf. Over the centuries the special interests which each of the different European powers had in the Gulf region changed periodically: for the Portuguese, who played a role in the Gulf from 1507 onwards for more than 150 years and then for the Dutch East Indies Company, who began to contest the growing position of the English in the Gulf for the first time in the 1620s, the object of their endeavours was to achieve domination of the trade in the Gulf, particularly with Persia. This was also true for more than a century after the English East India Company was given its Royal Charter in December of 1600.

When later on India itself became the centre of all British concern in this region, unhindered access was of prime importance to the authorities of the British Empire. Her potential rivals, too, came to consider means of transport as the keys to the much coveted increase in influence in the region. Thus, Russian, French and German shipping lines and railway projects, with or without governmental encouragement,

competed in this area, which had, however, been declared "of vital importance" to the British crown. Before the First World War, the emphasis changed once again, and the most important concern became securing access to raw materials, in particular oil, by obliging as many of the littoral States of the Gulf as possible to grant concessions only to British companies—thus excluding American interests.

The Gulf ceased to be considered an Anglo-Indian lake only after the announcement made by the British Labour government in the closing years of the 1960s to abrogate all the treaties extending military and diplomatic protection to the sheikhdoms and emirates on its shores. The emerging new United Nations member States of the Gulf established diplomatic relations with an ever-increasing number of countries, including Germany during the early 1970s. Before that time Germany's contact with the Gulf had been haphazard, distant and suffered from periodic setbacks. Throughout the brief history of German relations with the Gulf, private initiative always far outweighed governmental activity.

To the best of our knowledge, the first German who visited if not the Gulf, at least the area to the north of it, was the physician and botanist Leonhard Rauwolf from Augsburg, who spent the years 1573-1576 in Syria, Mesopotamia and Kurdistan.<sup>1</sup> He published his observations in 1582 in Augsburg. Nearly a century later Jürgen Andersen from Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorf near the Danish border happened to reach the Gulf. He was one of many Germans who are known to have traveled as far as or even beyond the Gulf in the service of the Dutch East Indies Company.<sup>2</sup> Andersen joined it in 1644 as a sergeant. While accompanying an inspection assignment, later in the service of Shah Abbas II and eventually on his way home to Europe he visited Aden and

<sup>1</sup> See Hans-Rudolf Singer, "Deutsche Forschungsreisende in Arabischen Ländern" in *Araber und Deutsche. Begegnungen in einem Jahrtausend*, ed. Friedrich H. Kochwasser and Hans R. Römer (Tübingen, 1974), pp. 217-242.

<sup>2</sup> See *Reisebeschreibungen von deutschen Beamten und Kriegsleuten im Dienst der Niederländischen West- und Ostindischen Kompanien, 1602-1797*, ed. S.P. L'Honore Naber, 13 Bde (mehr nicht erschienen) (Den Haag, 1930-1932).

the Red Sea as well as Bandar Abbas, the island of Hormuz, Baghdad, Mosul and Syria. He arrived back in Gottorf in November 1650. The notes which he had written during six eventful and dangerous years in the east as far away as Japan were deposited in the Duke's library and published in 1669 by Adam Olearius.<sup>3</sup>

The most famous of the Germans who came to the Gulf region in the service of the Dutch East Indies Company was Baron von Kniphausen, "a Prussian gentleman who had served in the army of his own country and that of France."<sup>4</sup> He was the Company's Resident in Basra, where at the time trade in wool from Aleppo was particularly profitable for the Dutch. In 1753 he availed himself of the offer of the Ruler of Bandar Rig, Mir Nasir, who owned the island of Kharg, to establish a Dutch trading post, or *factory* there.<sup>5</sup> The post was garrisoned by 100 European soldiers and as many Africans; a substantial fort and a sheltered harbour were built, and the warehouses were full of sugar, pepper, sugar-candy, rice, leather and spices. The British Resident from Basra, who visited the island, reported that it was developing into a flourishing centre for trade and promised to become an important settlement in the Gulf, after the Baron had used diplomacy as well as military force to subdue Persian, Turkish, Arab and British competitors. In 1756 Baron Kniphausen wrote the most comprehensive report about the political and economic situation

<sup>3</sup> Adam Olearius, "Jürgen Andersen und Volkard Iversen, *Orientalische Reisebeschreibungen. In der Bearbeitung von Adam Olearius*" (Schleswig 1669), ed. Dieter Lohmeier, *Deutsche Neudrucke, Reihe: Barock*, vol. 27 (Tübingen, 1980).

<sup>4</sup> J.C. Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Oman, and Central Arabia* (Calcutta, 1908-1915), 2 vols., vol. I, part I, p. 129.

<sup>5</sup> For a description of these events see Lorimer, vol. I, pp.128-131 and 1207f and M. Niebuhr, *Travels through Arabia and Other Countries in the East, performed by M. [sic] Niebuhr*, translated into English by Robert Heron with notes, in two volumes (Edinburgh, 1792), vol. I, 154ff. See also B.J. Slot, *The Arabs of the Gulf 1602-1784: An Alternative Approach to the Early History of the Arab Gulf States and the Arab Peoples of the Gulf mainly based on sources of the Dutch East Indies Company* (Leidschendam, 1993), 365ff.

of the Gulf at the time.<sup>6</sup> He remained in charge of the island until 1759, when he returned to Batavia.

The name of a German explorer, Carsten Niebuhr, is synonymous with the earliest scientific description of large parts of Arabia and the Gulf. Niebuhr had been asked to join the expedition which was sent by the King of Denmark to explore "Arabia Felix" in the capacity of mathematician and astronomer; he was to provide maps and a precise description of the countries visited. Carsten Niebuhr was born a subject of the Elector of Hanover in 1733. He had studied mathematics in Göttingen at the time when Johann David Michaelis was promoting a critical historical approach to the Old Testament and conceived the plan of sending scientists to Arabia and the Holy Land. One other German, the artist Georg Wilhelm Baurenfeind, took part in the expedition; Friedrich Christian von Haven, professor of Oriental languages in Göttingen, and the doctor, Christian Carl Cramer, were Danes, and the naturalist Peter Forskål was a Swede. The travelers left Copenhagen in December 1760, and after having visited Constantinople, Egypt and Sinai proceeded to the less well-known eastern shores of the Red Sea and penetrated parts of Yemen. However, by February 1764, sickness had claimed the last but one of the expedition's members in Bombay. For the rest of this journey, which ended with his return to Copenhagen in November 1767, Carsten Niebuhr was alone, endeavouring nevertheless to fulfill the objectives of the expedition and bring back the answers to the questions with which the five gentleman had been charged before their departure. He first went alone from Bombay to Surat in March of 1764. When he also fell ill upon his return to Bombay, he sent all his manuscripts and the items which Forskål had collected to Copenhagen, lest he might also succumb to his illness.

Carsten Niebuhr's journey through the Gulf began on 8 December 1764 from Bombay in a small warship of the Dutch East Indies Company.

<sup>6</sup> The report by the Resident of the Dutch East Indies Company, Baron Knipphausen, and his deputy Van der Hulst was published as a translation, W. Floor, "A description of the Persian Gulf and its inhabitants in 1756" in *Persica*, vol. 8 (1979), pp. 162-185.

His first stop was Muscat, of which he gives a very favourable account. He regretted not having the time to become the first European to travel into the interior of Oman, a journey which he considered to be as safe as traveling in Yemen. On 19 January 1765 he sailed in a British ship to the important port of Bushire on the Persian coast of the Gulf, where he joined a caravan to Shiraz in order not to miss the famous ruins of Persepolis. From Bushire he traveled to the island of Kharg, which, according to Niebuhr, the Dutch East Indies Company had already lost to the English. From Kharg, Niebuhr sailed to Basra, whence he traveled through Mesopotamia back to Europe via Aleppo and the Holy Land.

In publishing the results of his mission, Carsten Niebuhr first addressed the scholars in his *Beschreibung von Arabien*, which was published in 1772 in German in Copenhagen.<sup>7</sup> An account of the itinerary followed in two volumes in 1774 to 1778, entitled *Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien und andern umliegenden Ländern*,<sup>8</sup> and he published the results of Peter Forskål's observations of animals in 1774 and of the flora of Egypt and Arabia in 1776. Information about the political, economic and social situation in the Gulf in the middle of the eighteenth century can be found in a great many places in Niebuhr's works. His descriptions are not necessarily given in a chronological or geographical order; rather, the most valuable observations form part of his systematic treatment of topics

<sup>7</sup> In order to make these results accessible to academics everywhere, Niebuhr, who had published the German version himself, presented a French translation in 1773, only to find that a Dutch publisher had already published an unauthorized and inferior translation. The Danish version, which came out in 1773, was not very satisfactory; see the account of his son Berthold Georg Niebuhr, which forms the last part of the reprint of his second account, *Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien und anderen umliegenden Ländern* (originally published in three volumes), republished by Erdmann Verlag (Tübingen, 1973) under the title *Entdeckungen im Orient*.

<sup>8</sup> The third volume was published in 1837 by Olshausen; after much of the material concerning the journey from Aleppo to Denmark had already been published in the 1770s by Heinrich Christian Boie in his journal *Deutsches Museum* in Meldorf, where Niebuhr became a civil servant in 1778 and where he died in 1815. The English translation is a selection of Niebuhr's work in two volumes by Robert Heron; it was published in 1792 in Edinburgh.



of interest, such as agriculture, manners, religious observations, or the tribal life as opposed to town life. He does not only describe what he happened to see, but seems to have made very extensive inquiries in order to deal comprehensively with these topics. On many occasions Niebuhr makes the point of refuting preconceived ideas which Europeans entertained at the time about Muslims and Arabs. Thus, Niebuhr's work became a most valuable example and a building block for subsequent generations of explorers of Arabia and the Gulf.

During the time of Niebuhr's visit to the Gulf it had already become evident that the Dutch influence in the Gulf was being eclipsed and that the English were in the ascendancy. Eventually, India became the focus of British colonial policy, and all considerations with regard to any country in the Orient became subordinated to the requirements of the British Indian Empire. As mentioned above, the prime consideration with regard to the Gulf was therefore its geographical role as an access route to India. In the nineteenth century the Gulf's markets, even though they were not blessed with extremely valuable commodities, were almost entirely dependent on India, and she in turn was Britain's biggest market. On 5 May 1903, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Lord Landsdowne made a statement in Parliament with regard to British policy in the Gulf, saying that "we should regard the establishment of a naval base or a fortified port in the Persian Gulf by any other Power as a very grave menace to British interests, and we should certainly resist it with all the means at our disposal."<sup>9</sup> This warning was directed in the first instance at Russia, but in the minds of those who formed public opinion in Britain at the time, Germany loomed large as the most menacing potential economic rival in the Gulf and elsewhere.

However, since Niebuhr left Basra in 1766 no German of consequence seems to have come to the Gulf until 1897, when Robert Wönckhaus, a merchant working for the Hamburg company Oswald &

Co. in Zanzibar, went to the Gulf and settled in Lingah.<sup>10</sup> He had discovered a niche for himself, buying mother-of-pearl shells from the pearling communities on the Arab shores of the Gulf, particularly Sharjah and Dubai. He paid them advances several months before the start of the pearling season. Eventually Robert Wönckhaus traded with all commodities which could be imported to or exported from the Gulf, and he opened offices in Bahrain, Bandar Abbas, Bushire and Basra. The success of the company invited the dissatisfaction of its mostly British rivals, and by 1907 Wönckhaus was frequently accused in business and political circles in London of having obtained subsidies from the German government in order to obtain a toe-hold in the Gulf for Berlin's diplomatic ambitions.

The introduction of a regular service from Hamburg to the Gulf in 1906 by the Hapag-Line, which was welcomed by all traders because it brought competition into a market which had until then suffered from a monopoly, fueled the fire of British suspicion about German designs in the Gulf. The shipping line was opened on 1 August 1906 to take in the ports of Hamburg, Antwerp, Marseilles, Aden, Djibouti, Muscat, Bandar Abbas, Lingah, Bahrain, Bushire and Basra, deliberately leaving out British ports in order not to cause political friction. Even in the first year of operation, the freight rates for the Gulf dropped dramatically, and the German shipping line had to contend with losses. It was treated as a foregone conclusion that the Hapag-Line and its agent in the Gulf, Wönckhaus, were subsidized by the German Government. Long after the First World War, Hapag's shipping magnate, Albert Ballin, and Robert Wönckhaus vigorously denied this allegation, pointing to the intensive efforts which Hapag's management had exerted in 1908 in London to convince the British shipping line serving the Gulf to arrange a joint

<sup>9</sup> *The Times*, 6 May 1903.

<sup>10</sup> See Jens B. Plass, *England zwischen Russland und Deutschland. Der Persische Golf in der britischen Vorkriegspolitik, 1899-1907, dargestellt nach englischem Archivmaterial*, (Hamburg, 1966), Institut für Auswärtige Politik, 395ff. See also Eugene Staley, "Business and politics in the Persian Gulf: the story of the Wönckhaus firm" in *Political Science Quarterly* (1933), pp. 367-385; reproduced in Charles Issawi, *op. cit.*, pp. 351-355.

venture.<sup>11</sup> Hapag continued with the service until the First World War, but the beginning of construction of the Baghdad railway came too late to compensate for the company's earlier losses.

It was ultimately not so much the commercial rivalry which worried the authorities in Bombay and London, but the calculation that the shipping line might be instrumental in bringing about the leasing of a coaling station in the Gulf, and that such a facility could also be used by the German navy. This fear of the possibility of the establishment of foreign bases or even coaling stations anywhere in the Gulf was particularly prevalent in the minds of many British Indian civil servants—and nowhere more so than with Percy Cox, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf between 1904 and 1913. It was the reason why a further business venture of the German company of Wöneckhaus was doomed to failure.<sup>12</sup>

Hassan ibn Ali and Co., a Sharjah-based company, which owned the concession to Abu Musa's iron oxide, agreed to provide up to 5,000 tons of ore to Wöneckhaus to market it. The Residency Agent in Sharjah, Abdul Latif, whose son was a shareholder, had been aware of the need to have only a strictly commercial agreement and to steer clear of the possibility that this concession might be interpreted in any way as a lease of territory. However, before the text of the agreement became available to the British Indian authorities, the Resident in Bushire, Percy Cox, advocated the revocation of the contract and vigorously pursued this objective in the following months by demonstrating that Hassan and Co. did not have the right to grant the concession in the first place. Acting on information and advice received from India, Whitehall agreed to support Sheikh Saqr bin Khalid al-Qasimi in expelling the company from the island. There followed a flood of statements and protests on the commercial as well as the political level, and the question of compensation for Wöneckhaus' losses remained unresolved until the war

<sup>11</sup> See Plass, *op. cit.*, 443ff.

<sup>12</sup> See also the following Plass, *op. cit.*, in particular, pp. 410-441.

broke out. The Foreign Office in London soon realized that it had been insufficiently informed in the first place and had condoned the British Indian overreaction to the detriment of Anglo-German relations. The Minister for India, John Morley, was highly indignant over Percy Cox's witch-hunt for Germans in the Gulf.

Such overreaction on the part of the British Indian leadership had some of its roots in the apparent success of German businessmen, bankers and diplomats in the neighbouring Ottoman territories. The German-owned Ottoman Railway Company of Anatolia obtained a concession from the Porte in 1888, and the Deutsche Bank, which controlled most German enterprises in Turkey, was given priority mining rights in connection with this railway concession.<sup>13</sup> German influence was rising in Istanbul, in particular after the German Emperor's visit to the Porte in 1898. The Deutsche Bank became a partner in a British-Dutch-German company, eventually called the Turkish Petroleum Company,<sup>14</sup> which obtained through a joint *démarche* of the German and British ambassadors in Istanbul from the Grand Vizir the concession for oil deposits in the *vilâyets* of Baghdad and Mosul. That was on 28 June 1914, just weeks before the outbreak of the First World War.<sup>15</sup> The most spectacular German project in Turkey was the Baghdad railway.<sup>16</sup> It captured the imagination of the wider public on both sides of the Channel, that there should one day soon be a direct link between Berlin and Baghdad. This internationally financed project was known to be a personal favourite of

<sup>13</sup> See Steven Hemsley Longrigg, *Oil in the Middle East: Its Discovery and Development*, 3rd ed. (London, 1968), 13f.

<sup>14</sup> After the First World War the shares of the Deutsche Bank were taken over by the French and formed the beginning of the French oil company Total. The Turkish Petroleum Company became the Iraq Petroleum Company, which became active in Qatar, the Trucial States and Oman, as well as elsewhere in the Middle East.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 29ff.

<sup>16</sup> See Friedrich H. Kochwasser, "Das Deutsche Reich und der Bau der Bagdad-Bahn. Ein Kapitel deutscher Orient-Politik", in *Araber und Deutsche: Begegnungen in einem Jahrtausend*, ed. Friedrich H. Kochwasser and Hans R. Römer (Tübingen, 1974).

both potentates, the Sublime Porte and the Kaiser. In consequence, politicians tended to overrate its value—or its threat.

What then did the German diplomatic presence in the Gulf amount to? Before 1871 Germany consisted of 4 kingdoms and 21 other States and free cities. Some of them had diplomatic representation in neighbouring or European States, but none reached the Gulf.<sup>17</sup> When the North German Federation, which existed from 1886 to 1870, was succeeded by the foundation of the German Empire in 1871, the Prussian Ministry for Foreign Affairs devolved into the Foreign Ministry for all of Germany under the new name of *Auswärtiges Amt*. Consular and diplomatic representation in the Gulf area was not high on the new ministry's list of priorities. Yet, while Germany was fast developing from an agricultural into an industrial State and needed markets and raw materials, the German economic ventures abroad demanded backing from Berlin comparable to what their rivals from other nations enjoyed. Thus, diplomats usually followed in the wake of businessmen; in this regard the establishment of consulates in the Gulf region was no exception.

The first German consul in the Gulf area was an honorary consul in Baghdad in 1894. He was replaced a year later by the career diplomat Richarz, who stayed in the post until 1907 with an interruption of one year in 1904/1905, while Püttmann was standing in for him. Richarz's reporting is a vivid testimony of the increasing mistrust between Britain and Germany before the First World War. His successor Hesse held this post intermittently until 1914. A vice-consul was appointed for Bushire in 1897, because this port had been chosen as the centre from which British Indian interests in the Gulf were coordinated by the Resident in the Persian Gulf. In consequence, other nations also sent their representatives in the Gulf to Bushire. The first person to represent

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<sup>17</sup> There were, however, occasions when the interests of one of the German States coincided with those of a Middle Eastern power; this occurred, for instance, when the Austrian Empress Maria Theresa's two opponents, the Ottoman Sultan Mustapha III and Prussia, formed an alliance. See Erich Feigl, *Musil von Arabien. Vorkämpfer der Islamischen Welt* (Vienna, 1985), p. 22.

Germany in this post was a diplomat by the name of Hauck. He was succeeded in 1899 by Dr. Reinhardt, who stayed there until 1903. Mutius served in Bushire from 1903 until 1905, when Listemann began nine years of service in this post, from which he was interned to India after the beginning of the First World War. Twice, in 1909/1910 and in 1913/1914, Wilhelm Wassmuss served in Bushire as leave relief for Listemann.

The Gulf and the policies of the established colonial powers in the region formed part of the reporting from several other German diplomatic posts, in particular the embassies in Constantinople and Tehran, the consulate-general in Calcutta, the consulates in Bombay, Beirut, Damascus and Aleppo, the consulate-general in Cairo and, of course, the embassies in London, St. Petersburg and Paris. Yet compared to the material which British civil servants had compiled about the Gulf, German information about the area was minimal. The German presence—consisting of a diplomat in Baghdad and one in Bushire and a handful of employees of some trading houses and a shipping line—was most prominent in the imagination of certain British Indian civil servants.

There was, however, Baron Max von Oppenheim. Who was he? A traveler—a scholar—a diplomat—a spy? What was his role in the Gulf? Max von Oppenheim was born in 1860, the son of a banker in Cologne. He studied law and was supposed to become a civil servant, but this career did not appeal to him. Being a man of independent means, he decided that he preferred to see the world and went to Morocco in 1886.<sup>18</sup> He spent the winter of 1892/1893 in Cairo, and in the summer of 1893 he traveled through the Gulf. The account of this journey did not

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<sup>18</sup> See also for the following, Werner Caskel, "Max Freiherr von Oppenheim" in *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, vol. 101, 1951, pp. 3-8. This obituary was written by the scholar who shared Oppenheim's work in later years and accomplished the posthumous publication of some of his unfinished projects.

appear until seven years later; having outgrown the format of a travel account, it had become an academic study of notable proportions.<sup>19</sup>

Baron Max von Oppenheim left Basra on 15 September 1893 in the steamer *Pemba* of the British India Steam Navigation Co., which was filled to capacity with horses destined for India.<sup>20</sup> The first stop was Muhammara at the mouth of the Karun River. Oppenheim found that "the entire Persian navy" was there on a visit—consisting of one ship, the *Persepolis*. Oppenheim arrived on 18 September in Bushire, of which he gives a very detailed description, and he adds that a German shipping company had begun service to Bushire in June 1895, but had given it up again soon afterwards. The next stop was Lingah, then Bandar Abbas, Jashk, Muscat, Gwadar and finally Karachi, from where Oppenheim traveled in northern India before leaving Bombay for Aden and Zanzibar.<sup>21</sup> He was back in Germany in January 1894.

The journey from Basra to Karachi was completed by ship. Oppenheim took every opportunity to go ashore and see the ports, but he did not have the chance to travel extensively in the hinterland. Yet the information which is given in nearly 70 pages in the book *Vom Mittelmeer zum Persischen Golf* is extremely detailed and varied regarding the political, tribal, economic and social situation at the time, as well as a good historical background, with references to the relevant sources and to other publications.

His scholarly research about the area was, however, not the most important aspect of Oppenheim's role in and for the Gulf. In late 1895 some circles in the Foreign Office in Berlin pointed out that expertise about the Muslim world was lacking within its ranks and that a specialist

<sup>19</sup> *Vom Mittelmeer zum Persischen Golf, durch den Hauran, die Syrische Wüste und Mesopotamien*, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1899/1900).

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 303-371.

<sup>21</sup> From Zanzibar, Oppenheim went to what he called "German soil" in East Africa.

in these matters should be attached to the office.<sup>22</sup> Max von Oppenheim became attaché in special capacity in the consulate-general in Cairo in June 1896. From Cairo, Oppenheim traveled to Arab and African countries, sometimes staying there for prolonged periods in order to study an area. He sent very detailed reports about his findings, wherever possible consolidating them with further research. Soon Oppenheim became the authority on Oriental matters throughout the governmental system; his reports were read in Berlin and substantially influenced decision makers. But Oppenheim did not want to continue with this diplomatic career and resigned in 1910 in order to concentrate on his academic quests, excavating Tell Halaf in Syria before the war.

In August 1914 Oppenheim was called back to the Foreign Office to establish a centre for Oriental matters.<sup>23</sup> He was sent to Constantinople in 1915, where he established a network of information and propaganda centres throughout the Orient. In this capacity he played an important role in the preparation and guidance of the various German diplomatic and military efforts to influence the people in many parts of the Orient against the powers of the Entente and if possible to gain their active support for the German-led alliance. Parts of the population of the British Empire were targeted for incitement to rise against their masters. Oppenheim's knowledge of people and politics in the areas in question was probably used more extensively than one can now ascertain by analysing the evidence from archival sources. The effect of Oppenheim's work, within the establishment of the German Foreign Office or as a scholar, was considerable. It helped to increase the knowledge about Oriental matters in Germany not only on the purely academic level, but it also enhanced the understanding of the contemporary situation in countries where few Germans had thus far gathered first-hand information. Oppenheim's copious writings about Egypt, Abyssinia, Chad, Sudan, Syria, the Arabian peninsula and the Turkish Empire in its entirety made

<sup>22</sup> See also the following: Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, *Orientalia Generalia*, No. 9, Nr. 1, vol. 1, pp. 2-19.

<sup>23</sup> This centre was called Nachrichtenstelle für den Orient.

the authorities in Germany realize that the Arab world of the time was extremely complex; thus he helped to open a new chapter in German awareness of the multiplicity of the Muslim world, of the situation of the Arabs in it, and of their political and cultural achievements and ambitions.

The *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf* was published early this century but remained classified as "secret" until 1968. One of the few pictures to be included among the huge amount of written material was of the fort of the Ruler of Abu Dhabi.<sup>24</sup> This photograph was taken by the German geographer Hermann Burchardt and published in a German scholarly journal.<sup>25</sup> The scholar-traveler had already been to Yemen and given an extensive description of its geography and economy, before embarking on a journey to the Gulf and Eastern Arabia. Realizing that it was impossible to travel without permission from the Turkish authorities, he asked the German Foreign Ministry to obtain such a paper for him in Constantinople. The ministry officials were more concerned about the repercussions which Burchardt's journey to the Gulf and in particular to Kuwait would have on the British authorities and suggested that Burchardt also obtain letters of recommendation to the British consular officers in the Gulf to preclude the possibility of misinterpretation on the part of the British.<sup>26</sup> The German ambassador in Constantinople, Marschall von Bieberstein, who sounded out the Turkish authorities, found that there would be no objection to Burchardt's journey to Najd and to him taking photographs. However, he warned that also requesting permission for British consular protection for the littoral States of the Gulf would not be well received by the Turks "because of the peculiar conditions in the

<sup>24</sup> See Lorimer, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 410; another of Burchardt's photographs shows the village of Qarah near al-Hasa on p. 642.

<sup>25</sup> Hermann Burchardt, "Ost-Arabien von Basra bis Maskat auf Grund eigener Reisen" in *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde* (Berlin, 1906), pp. 305-322.

<sup>26</sup> See despatch of the request for Turkish papers from Berlin, 18 December 1902, Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, *Türkei* 165, vol. 15, 276ff and related material on pp. 200-206.

territories to be visited", where British and Turkish interests overlapped in some areas.<sup>27</sup>

Hermann Burchardt left Basra on 6 December 1903 in a local craft called *boom*. He first went to Kuwait, where he obtained a very favourable impression of the town and the ruler, Sheikh Mubarak. During his three days in the town, the latter told him about the visit of the German delegation to ascertain a port for the Baghdad railway and about Lord Curzon's more recent visit. Burchardt continued his journey, was hospitably received by the British Political Agent in Bahrain, Mr. Gawskin, and then went to Hufuf on the mainland, where he stayed for 16 days as the guest of the Turkish commander. From al-Hasa, Burchardt went overland to Qatar with the caravan of the monthly messenger for the Turkish garrison in Doha. He arrived in Abu Dhabi after a two-day journey by sea from Qatar, passing Qarnain and Zirku.

Hermann Burchardt was very graciously received by the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi and spent several days in which he was able to see this growing centre of the pearling industry and to take photographs. His sojourn in Dubai was less enjoyable, because due to the absence of the ruler, the population seemed to have no guidelines on how to treat a total stranger; in consequence, Burchardt had some words of criticism for that part of his journey.<sup>28</sup> He left Dubai on 22 February 1904 by small boat, stopped in a number of ports and bays in the Musandam peninsula and, having stopped in Sohar, arrived on 12 March in Muscat, where he stayed for several days with the British Resident, Captain Graham. From Muscat, Burchardt took the steamer to return to Germany.

In 1908 Hermann Burchardt was once again preparing for a journey, this time to return to Yemen. The traveler and diplomat Baron Max von Oppenheim recommended that the German embassy in Constantinople again help to obtain the necessary permits from the

<sup>27</sup> See *Türkei* 165, vol. 16, 18f.

<sup>28</sup> See Hermann Burchardt, *op. cit.*, 314ff.

Turkish authorities.<sup>29</sup> Burchardt did not return from that journey, but was killed in Yemen. It is obvious from the archives that Burchardt was not only not traveling at the behest of the German Government, but that the latter preferred not to have anything to do with him, because his presence in the Gulf was bound to lead to misinterpretation on the part of the British at a time when every German move was reported via Bushire to India and London, or was taken up by the newspapers as proof of German anti-British "machinations."

Having played such a peripheral role for German foreign policy throughout the initial four and a half decades of the Kaiserreich, the Gulf became much more important in German strategic thinking once Britain entered the war in August 1914. Turkey decided in October to enter on the side of Germany and Austria. A *jihad*, a holy war, was proclaimed by Sultan Mehmet Resat Khan V in his capacity as Khalifah of all Islam on 14 November 1914, calling on all Muslims to rise against Britain and Russia and other members of the Entente which were oppressing or threatening their countries. Although the Mushtahid of Kerbala and Najaf, the highest spiritual authority of the Shiah, decreed the holy war, too, the hoped-for Persian support did not materialize. Instead, the Shah issued a decree of Persian neutrality on 1 November 1914.

Strategically the region around the Gulf was of importance because of the possibility of denying Britain one of its access routes to India as well as the use of the oil which was already being refined at Abadan.<sup>30</sup> Turkey was probably more concerned with the need to keep Russia away from the Gulf. Thus, while there were the joint campaigns in Mesopotamia, there were also a number of limited actions, which were

<sup>29</sup> See *Türkei* 165, vol. 29, p. 188; Oppenheim enclosed a copy of the article written about the Gulf trip (pp. 189-214).

<sup>30</sup> In the spring of 1914 Britain acquired the majority of the 4 million shares of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC); the refinery began operation in September 1912. The monthly production of APOC before the war was 6.6 million gallons; see Ulrich Gehrke, *Persien in der Deutschen Orientpolitik während des Ersten Weltkrieges*, (Stuttgart, 1961), vol. II, p. 17, footnote 36.

entirely planned and executed by the German military and the diplomats. One such example was the destruction of the APOC (Anglo-Persian Oil Company) oil pipeline south of Ahwaz on the Karun River, which was carried out in March and again in April 1915 by German explosives experts attached to the expeditionary task force under Fritz Klein.<sup>31</sup> The possibility of the Muslims on the Indian subcontinent rising against the British in India and the consequences of such an event for the course of the war was of growing interest to Berlin and was eventually translated into the plan to mount a joint Turkish-German expedition to Afghanistan in order to convince Kabul to enter the war against Britain.

This expedition never had much hope of success, having been ill-organized from the start and suffering from irreconcilable differences between the German and the Turkish leadership.<sup>32</sup> But it had an originally not intended effect on the role of Germany in the Gulf during the war, because it brought Wilhelm Wassmuss to the tribes inland of the Gulf, a German who was called the "Lawrence of Iran." He was able to rouse enough anti-British sentiment among the population of an area the size of France to keep the British authorities in the Gulf extremely worried for several years during the war.<sup>33</sup>

Wilhelm Wassmuss had been the caretaker consul in Bushire from 1913 until the end of July 1914, during which time he had spent a great deal of time up country and had learned the language as well as the politics and customs of the tribes. He was *en route* from the Gulf via India to take up a new post in Cairo when the war broke out. He was briefly interned in Aden, but being a diplomat in transit from one neutral country to another, Wassmuss was able to continue his journey. After a

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 91ff.

<sup>32</sup> An account of this expedition forms part of the study of Persia during the war years by Gehrke, *op. cit.*

<sup>33</sup> See for the following Gehrke, *op. cit.* and Christopher Sykes, *Wassmuss, the German Lawrence* (London and New York, 1936), and Dagobert Mikusch, *Wassmuss, der Deutsche Lawrence. Auf Grund der Tagebücher und Aufzeichnungen* (Berlin, 1937).

stop in Cairo he returned to Berlin and was immediately asked to join the Afghanistan expedition. He became its leader for some time, but left this group in January 1915 at Baghdad in order to take up a post as consul in Shiraz. For various reasons Wassmuss had to part with most of his companions, and his caravan consisted of very few people, when it was entrapped with the help of Haidar Khan of Bandar Rig, a supporter of the British, while on its way to Bushire, where Wassmuss had intended to link up secretly with the German consul, Listemann. Wassmuss was able to escape under cover of darkness, but Dr. Lenders, the rest of his expedition, the equipment and some papers were captured by Haidar Khan and delivered to the British Resident in the Gulf, a former sporting companion of Wassmuss in Bushire, Percy Cox. The ship which had been sent from India in order to convey the internees left on 8 March 1915 from Bushire with Dr. Lenders as well as the German consul, Listemann and the representative of Wöneckhaus in Bushire, Mr. Eisenhut and his wife. The fact that Persian neutrality<sup>34</sup> had been violated in this incident became one of the themes which gave Wassmuss leverage to stoke anti-British feelings in southern Iran.

Wilhelm Wassmuss went to Shiraz, where the Persian governor condoned his campaigning against British infringement of Persian neutrality and for the release of the German consul and the other Germans taken from Persia to India. But the ultimate aim of Wassmuss was to achieve Persia's entry into the war on the side of Germany and Turkey. Traveling among the tribes, Wassmuss was successful in convincing some of the tribal leaders in the vicinity of Bushire and elsewhere on the Gulf coast of the need, as he saw it, for Persians to rid themselves of foreign domination—to which end they should embrace the German cause. In order to operate more effectively, he asked the German ambassador in Tehran in June 1915 to be relieved of his position as consul in Shiraz. During the summer of 1915 the Tangistani tribe on the coast of the Gulf mounted several attacks on the British post in Bushire, killing two Englishmen and several Indians. British reprisals were severe, and on

<sup>34</sup> The use and misuse of this notion of Persian neutrality is discussed by Gehrke, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-81.

8 August Bushire was declared "occupied." This was later reversed, however, so as not to give Russia a pretext to occupy parts of northern Persia. This only helped to increase the anti-British sentiments in the vicinity of Bushire and Shiraz.

However, developments in the north of the country diminished the chances of Wassmuss ever obtaining the supplies on which his offensive in the south depended—physically, because ammunition was running out, and psychologically, because the tribes had been promised substantial financial subsidies which were not forthcoming. On 15 November 1915 the Russian-officered Cossack brigade advanced to the immediate vicinity of Tehran, and the German ambassador Prince Reuss, who had worked until then for a German-Persian accord, left the capital, assuming that the young Shah would follow. By the end of 1915 Persia was as good as lost for the Austro-German-Turkish alliance—politically and militarily<sup>35</sup>—*vis-à-vis* any further role in establishing a land bridge to India or in rousing the Muslims of India to revolution. While Russia and Britain were fast carving up between them the central regions of Persia that had not been part of the declared spheres of influence of either power in the "Constantinople Agreement" of 1907, southern Persia was increasingly being administered in the British Indian fashion.

The growing number and superior equipment of the newly raised "South Persian Rifles" was, however, not in a position to break the hold which Wassmuss and his Tangistani tribesmen enforced over the vital access route from Bushire to Shiraz. For three and a half years he denied the British the use of this route, at least for military equipment. Eventually Wassmuss was taken prisoner by the Persian authorities and handed over to the British, who after the collapse of Russia had almost unlimited influence. After the war was over, Wassmuss was escorted back to Germany, a journey which took several months.

<sup>35</sup> At this time the operation of Feldmarschall von der Goltz was still only in its beginning in Baghdad.

## BACKGROUND

After the exit of Tsarist Russia from the Entente, Britain was able to reach an agreement with Persia in August 1919, which gave Persia the status of a quasi-protectorate, and urged Persia to issue a blacklist in November 1919, containing the names of 73 Germans, 10 Austrians, 13 Swedes and 1 Turk, who were not allowed to return to Persia for 10 years. At the end of the war, a defeated Germany was no longer present on a diplomatic or consular level anywhere in the region, with the exception of the chargé von Blücher officiating in Tehran, and later a chargé in Baghdad. There was likewise an almost total absence of German economic activity in the area in the years after the war.

After the termination of the British mandate in 1932 in Iraq and the accession to power of Adolf Hitler in 1933, the German chargé in Baghdad, Fritz Grobba, was elevated to the rank of ambassador. With his command of Arabic, Persian and Turkish, he was able to exert considerable influence among many of the educated anti-British Iraqis, using propaganda which focused on the unsatisfactory situation in Palestine, the French and British colonial aspirations and anti-Jewish sentiments among some parts of the population. Internal discontent in Arab countries was welcomed by the Nazi German authorities, providing a constant threat to Britain and her allies. After the outbreak of the Second World War, Germany seems to have deliberately left to its ally Italy the initiative to expand as best she could her Mediterranean interests into the Arab world, reserving for herself the possibility to reap economic benefits after the war—particularly from Iraqi oil.<sup>36</sup>

The development of relations between Germany and the Gulf region after the Second World War followed the established pattern, namely that economic interests preceded the establishment of political ties and formal

## Germany and the Gulf before 1971

diplomatic relations. In this case, however, both the economic and the political relations were extremely slow in developing. Two decades after the end of the war there was hardly a German company or individual working anywhere in the Gulf, and the first consular representation was only established in 1963 in Kuwait.

There were two quite different reasons for this delay. The first was to be found in the status of the Arab countries bordering the Gulf: being in treaty relationship with Great Britain meant that there was no need and no room for diplomatic missions until the abrogation of these treaties in 1971. The only exception was Kuwait, whose status—since 1899—of an emirate in a somewhat restrictive treaty relationship with Britain was changed by the Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement of June 1961, whereafter Kuwait began to take up diplomatic relations with many countries.

The second reason for the slow development of diplomatic relations between Germany and the Gulf countries was the special position which Germany found itself in after the Second World War. Since the inception of the Federal Republic, German policy *vis-à-vis* the Middle East has been dominated by the relationship with the State and people of Israel, emanating from the guilt over the Nazi regime's atrocities against Jews. German politics after the war are inseparable from the urge to live up to the moral obligations of dealing with these shameful events.

Therefore, throughout the Adenauer era (1949-1963) the German government and the public in general did not take into consideration the extent to which this single-minded preoccupation with her own past precluded any appreciation of the plight of the Palestinians and of the political objectives of Arab States.<sup>37</sup> In the late 1940s the government

<sup>36</sup> See Walid M.S. Hamdi, *Rashid Ali al-Gailani: The Nationalist Movement in Iraq, 1939-1941* (London: Darf Publishers, 1987). The author of this book is of the opinion that Rashid Ali did not act on prompting from Nazi Germany and claims that the secret agreement between him and the Italian ambassador, promising various privileges to the Axis powers in return for recognition, was a fabrication of the British to destroy the image of this nationalist leader; see 54f.

<sup>37</sup> A very balanced overview of the German policy in the Middle East is given by Friedemann Büttner and Peter Hünslers, "Die politischen Beziehungen zwischen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und den Arabischen Staaten. Entwicklung, Stand und Perspektiven", in Karl Kaiser and Udo Steinbach, eds., *Deutsch Arabische Beziehungen. Bestimmungsfaktoren und Probleme einer Neuorientierung* (Munich and Vienna, 1981), pp. 111-152.



of the newly established West German State (FRG) offered compensation to the new State of Israel, and in September 1952 a formal reparation agreement, *Wiedergutmachungsabkommen* was signed, through which Israel was to receive DM 3 billion over 14 years, with a further DM 450 million to go to Jewish organizations worldwide. It was hoped that such gestures would help to readjust the image of Germany abroad, in particular among the Western nations with whom the FRG was forging alliances and partnerships. In the eagerness to deal with the huge psychological national burden of guilt and readjustment, there seemed to have been very little scope for considering the situation of the Palestinians or the attitudes and political aspirations of the Arab States. Yet support for the other German political preoccupation, reunification, was expected from all countries with whom the FRG had any contacts. Egypt was the first Arab State with whom the FRG established diplomatic relations in 1951, followed by Syria in 1952 and others in due course. But on 13 May 1965, the day after the establishment of diplomatic relations between the FRG and Israel, 10 Arab States broke off their diplomatic relations in protest, and three others recalled their ambassadors.

Economic relations between Germany and the Gulf area developed slowly but steadily after the Second World War. West Germany's spectacular economic growth made it a major consumer of Arab oil. But Germany did not have a significant share in the big international oil companies and therefore did not play a major role in the oil industry while the latter was in the process of radically transforming the Gulf countries. From the late 1960s onwards, when the restrictions on non-British economic activities in the Gulf began to disappear, a few German companies became shareholders in ongoing ventures or secured their own oil concessions. Wintershall AG obtained an offshore concession in Oman, but no oil was found and the company pulled out in 1972. In 1966 the Deutsche Erdöl AG (DEA), which was later taken over by Texaco, invested in a share of a concession area in Dubai, a venture

which Wintershall AG also joined as a partner.<sup>38</sup> Deminex was offered a 20 percent share in the significant, already-producing offshore concession of Abu Dhabi, but the company turned down this offer in July of 1972, and the share was eventually taken up by a consortium of Japanese companies.<sup>39</sup> Both companies, Deminex and Wintershall, have since been engaged in several oil or gas ventures in the Gulf, notably in Ras al-Khaimah, Oman and Qatar, but have not come up with major finds.

The activities of other German companies in the Gulf before 1971 were limited to a few specialized building companies and the provision of items used for infrastructure projects such as power stations and communications, and securing contracts in Saudi Arabia and the other oil-producing Arab countries. Export of manufactured goods, cars, machinery and building plant constituted the major part of the economic links between Germany and the Gulf, with banking, insurance and other services being still firmly in British hands at that time. The balance of payments between Germany and the entire Arab world, particularly the Gulf, remained in deficit because of the oil-imports.<sup>40</sup>

Although the German economy was increasingly dependent on the importation of oil from the Gulf, diplomatic relations developed slowly for the above-mentioned reasons. A consulate was first established in Kuwait in November 1963; the incumbent consul was responsible for consular matters throughout the Gulf countries. The post was upgraded to a consulate-general in August 1966 and became an embassy in April 1971 in anticipation of changes after British withdrawal from the area.

<sup>38</sup> By the end of the 1970s Dubai was the most important source of foreign-produced oil for these two German oil companies; see Aziz Alkazaz, "Die Deutsch-Arabischen Wirtschaftsbeziehungen. Entwicklung und Zukunftsperspektiven", in Karl Kaiser, *op. cit.*, pp. 155-1183, here pp. 176.

<sup>39</sup> See Frauke Heard-Bey, "The oil industry in Abu Dhabi: A changing role" in *Orient*, vol. 1, 1976, pp. 108-140.

<sup>40</sup> See Alkazaz, *op. cit.*, 155ff.

In the spring of 1969 some of the most important Arab States, such as Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Sudan and others established diplomatic relations with the communist German Democratic Republic (GDR); the FRG was not represented in these countries.<sup>41</sup> By the time the Arab States of the Gulf were in a position to consider their options *vis-à-vis* the two German States, the FRG had given up the "Hallstein doctrine" according to which a country which opted for diplomatic relations with the GDR automatically lost diplomatic ties with the FRG and also had no hope of West German economic assistance. Kuwait was the only Gulf State which had diplomatic relations with the GDR. These were established in 1973, and the first ambassador from Berlin, then the capital of the GDR, took up residence in 1975.

After 1971, the UAE was the first Gulf country to establish diplomatic relations with Bonn, and the first German ambassador came to the capital Abu Dhabi in 1973. These countries, namely the UAE, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman all became members of the United Nations after the British withdrawal.

The relationship between Germany and the Gulf, from its inception until the establishment of diplomatic relations in the 1970s, was never one of very great political or economic importance for either side. When there was movement between the two areas, it was due to the interest and activity of German individuals, some of whom, such as Robert Wönckhaus or Wilhelm Wassmuss, became intimately associated with this region. As has been shown, official German interest in the Gulf has usually been confined to reacting to already established economic links. When Germany's special relationship with Turkey gave her a large share in the Baghdad railway project, which was likely to be extended to Kuwait, thereby threatening British Indian interests in the Gulf, the damage to Anglo-German relations in the crucial years of the disintegration of the European power balance was disproportionate to the minimal extent of German influence in the Gulf. Considerations of the wider consequences of actively improving relations with the Gulf area

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<sup>41</sup> See Büttner und Hünslers, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

have continued to restrain German steps in the direction of the countries of the Gulf, during the time when these countries themselves were not in a position to take the initiative towards closer ties with Germany. The altered situation from 1971 opened the way to a new chapter in these relations.

## **THE UAE AND GERMANY**

## 2

### IMAGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

*Yousef Al-Hassan*

The United Arab Emirates—as a vital part of the Gulf—has always been of strategic importance. Historical records indicate that international and human relations with the Gulf area have continued for several centuries; such relations have reached a highly developed stage in the fields of economy, trade, culture, politics, etc. Thus, the UAE has come to mean a great deal to the rest of the world. In fact, it is a major source of energy as well as a large, flexible and dynamic market. It is also a bridge opening onto several external markets both in the Far East and the Near East, a source of Arab culture increasingly representing an opportunity for interaction between cultures and for regional and international cooperation. Even more, the UAE is in the forefront of the Arab world, being open to a number of new cultures in both the Indian and Pacific oceans.

The UAE is a major oil-producing and -exporting country and makes a significant contribution to providing the world's consuming markets with energy supplies, and to helping promote the development and stability of the world economy; the importance of the UAE stems from its vast quantity of oil reserves, which rank second in the world. It is a country where development efforts were successful, especially in identifying places where opportunities for economic growth were latent, and this contributed effectively and in a balanced way to minimizing any effects of global economic fluctuations and the unstable nature of oil prices. Apart from the crude oil sector, the gross national product (GNP)

amounted to about 71.4 billion dirhams (Dh) in 1991, whereas the oil sector accounted for about Dh 53.8 billion during the same year. Apart from crude oil, the participation of the economic sectors in GNP in 1980 was about 36 percent, increasing in 1991 up to 57 percent. Investments carried out in 1991 reached about Dh 25 billion.<sup>1</sup>

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The present Germany is the largest country in Europe in terms of population and economy and has a new role to play in the world scene commensurate with its superiority in science and technology, and its economic and political clout. At the same time—during the last three decades—Germany has had a particular attraction for Arabs, particularly for Gulf Arabs. On the political level, Germany neither took part in the creation of Israel nor any of the Western military projects having a relation to the area or to its regional wars. The history of Germany is void of any hegemony, guardianship or mandate in the Arab world. The German Orientalists have differed from the English and French, who were known for their endeavours on behalf of their countries' imperialistic objectives.

German-Arab relations began during the Age of Enlightenment. They stemmed from the mutual admiration found among thinkers, intellectuals and writers regarding their respective intellects and cultures. This was manifested in the variety of research, literary works and translations and in the establishment of schools and colleges dealing with language, philosophy, literature, heritage and the thought of Germans as well as that of Arabs.

The German Orientalists studied pre-Islamic poetry, Andalusian poetry and many other Arabic works of literature. They established various cultural institutes in different Arab capitals, such as a German institute in Beirut, during the first half of the nineteenth century, to be a

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<sup>1</sup> For additional information, see "An ancient people, a young country," chapter 22 of the present volume.

connecting link between the German Orientalists and the Arabs of the East and its men of literature, poetry and thought. In the same way, the German School in Cairo, established during the second half of the nineteenth century, is still open today. In Germany, a German society for Oriental research was established in 1845. Today its members number more than 600 researchers and students.

At the same time, Arab intellectuals presented comprehensive studies on the major trends of German society, culture and literature. A recent example is a work by Dr. Abdul Rahman Badawi on half a century of German poetry, which was published in Kuwait in early 1994. This study includes a detailed discussion of the poet R.M. Rilke (1875-1926) and his relations with Egypt, Tunisia, Andalusia and Algeria as well as his admiration for Islam and Islamic art. Many men of literature and specialists translated various German works of literature and philosophy into Arabic, including the works of Kant, Goethe, Schiller, Brecht, etc.

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The German image in the Arab mind is somewhat better than that of the other Europeans, yet it is not homogeneous or stereotyped.

The Arabs describe the Germans as being materialistic, secular, scientific, productive and industrious. To this image were added many other positive descriptions in the period between the two world wars, such as disciplined, punctual, perfectionist, admiring of power, etc.

The present image is a mixture made up of old images and recent ones that crystallize in a picture of artistic ability, hard work, solid industry, especially as regards automotive and industrial machinery, and the manufacture of effective pharmaceuticals and beautiful and durable textiles.

Some observers of German society, however, fear that these positive images are disappearing and believe, as Dieter Vogel, the German government spokesman put it in a speech delivered at the International

Public Relations Association Congress in Frankfurt that "some of these characteristics are only barely perceptible."<sup>2</sup>

The author believes that the latest racist incidents such as the attacks on foreign refugees and workers in a number of German cities as well as the appearance of the neo-Nazis have given rise to negative reactions all over the world, including the Arab region. The increase and escalation of these bloody incidents might lead to the belief that Germany wishes to put on a military uniform again. However, the large-scale and strong protests mounted by Germans against extremism and racism are reassuring.

Germany is reputed for the trust it enjoys abroad. This stems from the fact that it is a country based upon the rule of law and the preservation of rights, with a stable, efficient and successful democratic system, in addition to the fact that it has enjoyed significant social and economic success.

It is doubtless that the German image existing in the mind of the Arab is colourful and positive. Yet the general Arab impression of Germany's political image is tainted with ambiguity and hesitation, sometimes with the failure to take the initiative. This policy, however, is the natural result of Germany's European and international situation. It seems at the present time that Germany follows a dynamic policy towards the Arab region in general and the Gulf in particular, especially as regards economics and technology, in the context of the more prominent role it plays on the international stage.

During the last two years, exchange visits by officials and businessmen have multiplied. German businessmen have become aware of the importance of the Gulf region, and especially of the United Arab Emirates as a regional centre; the UAE is not only a good and flexible

market, but also a gateway to the neighbouring countries in Asia and Africa.

In October 1993, Germany and the United Arab Emirates signed an agreement to eliminate double taxation on income and capital and to curb tax evasion. This agreement was considered to be an advancement in the cooperative relations between the two countries, aimed at creating a suitable climate for the movement of capital and for expanded cooperation; it also aimed at alleviating the burden of taxation in both the public and private sectors of each of the two countries so as to improve the investment resources between them.

This agreement was not void of political aspects, as it was reached thanks to the strong friendship binding the two countries. It is expected that Germany and the UAE will sign other agreements to protect and secure investments. The oil exports of the UAE to Germany are expected to increase, especially after the decline in Russian oil exports to the latter.

Among the Arab countries, the United Arab Emirates was Germany's second largest trade partner in 1993, after Saudi Arabia. The markets of the UAE are the fourth largest Middle East market for imports of German products, after Iran, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Surveys indicate that German exports to the GCC amounted to about DM 8 billion in 1992.

Recently, the German Office of Foreign Trade was opened in Dubai. It aims at increasing German exports and at developing investments in the Gulf region, Iran and the Indian sub-continent. The Office endeavours to provide commercial information for German industry and to establish relations between businessmen and markets in the two countries. Yet there are still negative images and hurdles which must be overcome and opportunities which must be tracked down in order to deepen the dialogue, cooperation and relations between the UAE and Germany. Among the negative images is the stereotype of the Arab in some publications and in the media in Germany. Added to this are the decreasing numbers of Arab students—especially from the Gulf region—who enter German schools and universities. Educational and

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<sup>2</sup> *Deutschland* magazine (issued by the German Government in Arabic), No. 2 (December 1993), p. 66.

cultural exchanges between the two parties seem very limited. This calls upon us to create opportunities and to open the doors wide to extensive cultural exchange between the two parties in various fields, especially technology, science, training, and Oriental studies and languages, and to set up programmes for touristic, technical, youth and university exchanges.

Diplomatic policies are able to create alliances between nations and countries, economic policies and commercial exchanges are able to create partners, but it is cultural policies and cultural interactions that are able to create friends.

## 3

### THE IMAGE OF ARABS IN GERMANY

*Leslie Tramontini*

Asked to write about the German perception of the Arabs, I immediately thought of all the incorrect, oversimplified or idealized images the Germans like to entertain about the Arabs. This was not astonishing, I realized as I thought the matter over, since the Arab world is far removed from Germany, and from German reality and German politics. It is worthwhile pointing out that even the German perception of the Italians, for example, is full of clichés and wrong ideas, and Italy is only a few hours drive away. These attitudes have their origins in social and historical factors but their persistence lies in the indifference which is displayed towards the other culture.

In the following pages I have tried to convey to the reader what the Germans think of the Arabs and why. A historical introduction is followed by an outline of the general perception of the Arabs by the German public. Afterwards the influence on the German mind of Orientalism and of literature is analysed. The connections of German industry with the Arab countries and the efforts to establish good business relations with each other are not covered, as I am not well-versed in these topics. I would like to point out that it was rather an unpleasant task writing about the general view the Germans have of the Arabs. Needless to say, this view does not at all coincide with my own opinion and ideas.

To understand the ambivalent nature of the image of the Arabs in Germany, it is necessary to look back to the time when the first contacts and confrontation between East and West took place.

In the Middle Ages and before, the two sides perceived each other not on the basis of sound judgment but under the influence of the rivalry between their differing religions. While the Orient viewed Christianity in a negative way, the image of Islam in the West was characterized by ignorance and prejudice. The fact that only certain carefully chosen points of Islam were selectively studied and then polemically used prevented an objective understanding. But it was the rise and circulation of popular stories during the Crusades which began influencing and shaping the general perception of the Arabs and Islam, stories with the aim of entertaining, but without much regard to truth.

With the rise of the Ottoman Empire, *Turk* became a synonym for Muslim while the *Arab* faded into the background and did not play any political or other role. During this time the Orient was viewed as a highly civilized and blossoming empire characterized by pomp and grandeur. And it was in this period that the romantic and idyllic image of the Orient established itself in the European mind—an image which has persisted until the present day.

The beginning of the nineteenth century brought a major change in attitude. The imperialistic outlook of this epoch created a new "European ethnocentrism" (as M. Rodinson put it) which confirmed the superiority of the West over the East—another image which still dominates the general perception of the Arabs and the East. In the West (and of course also in Germany) the concept of "progress" has begun to present itself as a continuation of the missionary spirit in the sense that no way of living besides the Western one is acceptable. Any people living in a different way is automatically considered backward or underdeveloped. The only thing for such a society to do is to establish as quickly as possible this development and progress. This attitude dominates the thinking of many Westerners/Germans and makes them immune to a real appreciation of

any different culture. It consolidates the feeling of superiority over the East,<sup>1</sup> which goes hand in hand with certain stereotyped images.

One can say that the current German view of the Arab is split into two totally different categories: first is the old romanticized view which is based on literary subjects. It is influenced by the stories of *A Thousand and One Nights* and the adventure stories of the famous German fiction writer Karl May (1842-1912). There, a past idyllic and somewhat illusory Orient is evoked. The other image is mostly negative and completely separated from this diffuse and unreal picture of the "Orient". The fact that so many different Arab States exist renders it difficult for the Germans to obtain a clear picture.<sup>2</sup> They are confounded by the varying Arab political systems and lifestyles, and so, to reach an opinion, they oversimplify. If you were to ask ordinary people on the street to characterize the Arabs they will mention to you as typical the following traits: an acceptance of violence, a spirit of self-sacrifice and egoism, of fatalism and fanaticism—contradictory attitudes which are considered to be pre-modern, strange and frightening. This is the general image of the Arabs in the German mind, and it has its origins in recent political developments.

<sup>1</sup> On the other hand the Arabs nourish a similar feeling of superiority over the West. Although they still acknowledge its scientific/technological superiority, there has been a major change in the evaluation of the West during this century. Whereas before it had constituted a symbol of progress and political ideals, it is now considered more and more to be decadent and immoral. The Arab people take pride in their own moral and ethic principles, in their strong family ties and—more than ever—in Islam. It is similar to the West, where people have a somewhat distorted and simplified view of the East due to the lack of information or to incorrect information. If the Arab public draws its knowledge about the Western way of life from sources such as the television series "Dallas", it is no wonder that a negative attitude has built up.

<sup>2</sup> I would like to point out that the situation is the very same the other way round. Unless they have studied in or visited Europe or the United States, the Arabs usually talk about "the West" without differentiating among the European countries, the U.S., etc. (although the American way of living differs in many ways from the German, as does the Italian, and so on). On the other hand it is very important in this context to stress the fact that the educated Arabs have much better and more detailed knowledge of the West than educated Westerners have of the Arab world.



The role of the media in image-making would be worth a thorough analysis by itself. In this context, however, I can only stress the fact that the media has contributed a great deal to the one-sided and distorted picture the Germans have of the Arabs. The reports on Arabs/Muslims are always caused by negative events, which affect the West/Germany in a negative way. It is not surprising that negative ideas continue to be associated with the term *Arab*.

The Germans with their historical guilt towards the Jewish community have supported the State of Israel in all ways, financially, materially and in principle. This is the official policy which has been followed in the nearly 50 years since the end of the Second World War. With no colonial past in the Arab world, the Germans found themselves rather uninterested in its development and situation, and the continuous wars between Israel and its Arab neighbours have created a negative impression. However, broad segments of the public do not share in the official attitude, and the younger generation is tending more and more to support the Palestinian cause and the Palestinians' struggle for freedom and their own homeland.

I believe that it was only during the 1970s that the German public awakened from its indifference towards the Arab world. Two major factors led to this. The first was the oil crisis of 1973, with which the Arabs forced themselves into existence in the German mind. This experience has lived on in the German mind, in a mix of reality and fiction that sees the Arabs as fabulously wealthy, as in the *Arabian Nights*. The other factor was the growing terrorism within Germany—and the fact that many members of the Baader-Meinhof Gang were trained in Lebanon did not increase the popularity of the Arabs in Germany. The emergence of Arab and Muslim terrorists who fought for a widely unknown cause confirmed the by then established opinion that the Arabs were irrational and easily manipulated people.

The same judgement is now applied to the Muslim fundamentalists whose open hostility towards the West is perceived above all as a danger to Western interests (oil, tourism, etc.). Due to increasing media reports

on this subject, the tendency to identify the Muslims with the fundamentalists is spreading.

During the Gulf crisis the Germans felt a physical fear of a new war which would spread to Europe. The many demonstrations which took place all over Germany (and which evoked harsh criticism from abroad) pleaded for peace under slogans such as "No blood for oil!" People feared a new surge of terrorism in Germany, ecological catastrophes and unforeseen political changes worldwide. This triggered a flow of information about the "Orient", Islam and the Arabic political mentality and way of life, which until then had been neglected in a careless and almost arrogant way. It is sad that only since this tragic event, when they felt their own interests in danger, has the German public wished to gain real information about the Arabs, information which is neither simplified nor falsified nor glorified and romanticized.

Some of the popular images of the Arabs have their roots in history and literature, and to a lesser extent in the impact of Oriental studies. These came into being during the sixteenth century in France, with ideological/religious purposes: the study of Semitic languages was encouraged for the purpose of a better and more detailed interpretation of the Bible. They then lent themselves to the aims of imperialism and confirmed the general feeling of superiority over the East: Islam was credited with the failure of progress in the Orient whereas Christianity was considered the reason for the economic and technical success of Europe.

The Orientalists specialized in the studies of the classical period of Arab history and concentrated on the Arabic language. The problems of the contemporary Arabs were neglected and considered unworthy of analysis.

It is no wonder that in Germany, with its long tradition of Orientalism as philology and as the study of literature, only now is the influence of social sciences like sociology and ethnography on Oriental studies gaining momentum. Even now, however, the teaching of Arabic

is similar to the teaching of Latin or classical Greek, viz. as a dead literary language. The main content of Arabic studies is the classical period in all its aspects, ignoring most of the modern literary or political movements. Students are not encouraged to visit or study in Arab countries to obtain their own impression of the Arab reality. Only slowly is the new generation of Orientalists succeeding in breaking up this tradition of teaching and studying Orientalism as if there were no Oriental people.

In contrast to the "image of non-existence" which Orientalism created, literature was able to produce a very positive image. Tolerance, as a characteristic feature of Islam, was highly praised and found repercussions in the literature and arts of Europe. At the very beginning of the German Romantic movement in the late eighteenth century, the Romantic concept of poetry and receptivity to foreign literature encouraged the development of an idealized and later on stereotyped image of the Muslim and the Arab (parallel to similar concepts in France and England). In Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's (1756-1791) opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, the Muslim ruler is depicted as wise, kind and tolerant; in Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's (1729-1781) dramatic poem *Nathan der Weise* (1779), which praises the equality of the three monotheistic religions, the positive image of Saladin is reconfirmed; Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) tried in his anthology *West-östlicher Divan* (1819) to find the similarities in human nature in East and West; and Johann Gottfried Herder's (1744-1803) view of "the Arabs as the teachers of Europe" was widely acknowledged. Later on one of the founders of the German Romantic movement, Novalis (Freiherr von Hardenburg, 1772-1801), lets one of the characters of his romance *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*, the Muslim girl Zulima, accuse the Christians of persecuting the Muslims. It was during this period that for the first time German-speaking readers were introduced to Arabic and Persian poetry through translations and *Nachdichtungen* by the poet and autodidact Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866), who had learned many Oriental languages and was able not only to translate them, but to reproduce their spirit in German.

German literature of the twentieth century has abandoned its former Arabic or Islamic "ideals". Apart from a very few exceptions, the Orient as a topic or a motif in literature has ceased to exist. There are some Arab and Turkish authors living in Germany and writing in the German language who try to bring near to their German readers their own culture and tradition. They emerged only recently on the literary scene. For example, the Iraqi Huda al-Hilali and the Turk Emine Sevgi Özdamar both published their first works in 1992 and were met with great success.

The other form of literary encounter, viz. translations from Arabic into German, hardly exists. Following the awarding of the Nobel prize for literature to the Egyptian author Naguib Mahfouz, some of his novels were translated into German, but generally speaking there is no translation movement which would include the literature of at least the more important Arab countries or which would have as its defined aim the providing of a sound and thorough insight into one or another of the literary trends of the Arab world. This fact can be interpreted either as indifference towards the Arab culture or as an indication that the former self-centredness still persists.

I am afraid it is not a very complimentary picture which I have described. I have tried to point out the reasons for this ambivalent perception of the Arabs, which is derived from historical events, literary motifs and most of all, recent politics, and which results in the romanticization or the condemnation of the Arabs. I have criticized German indifference, the German media, the German Orientalists and literati, for the prevailing tendency to simplify. There are not many people who have a good knowledge of the Arab world but I think that these few try to contribute to a change in attitude. As a German Orientalist who has been living in the Arab world for quite a few years, I define my position as an intermediary with the aim of providing a realistic and authentic view of the Arabs to the German people. But on the other hand, I do not see much effort being made from the Arab side to counter this negative image.

## THE UAE AND GERMANY

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### ADDITIONAL READING

For the general Western perception of the Arabs, see Maxime Rodinson, "The Western image and Western studies of Islam", in J. Schacht and C.E. Bosworth, *The Legacy of Islam*, 2d ed. (Oxford, 1979), pp. 9-62.

For the Arab view of Europe in modern times, see Peter Heine, "Europe and the Orient: Islam's confrontation with European modernism", in *Universitas* (February 1993), Stuttgart; pp. 114-123.

For the religious confrontations between the two cultures during the Middle Ages, see Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: the Making of an Image*, 4th ed. (Edinburgh, 1980).

## UAE INDUSTRY

## INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

*Muzafar al-Haj*

Like the other GCC countries, the economy of the UAE is significantly dependent on oil as a major source of income. It is beyond any doubt that such dependency on oil has created a threat to the future of the economy, since oil is subject to depletion. The concerned authorities therefore began studying alternative solutions to sustain the economy. It was unanimously agreed that reliance on oil must be reduced and that non-oil sectors be promoted, especially manufacturing. Needless to say, this suggested solution would require a thorough study of the non-oil sectors, so as to identify the sectors most likely to enhance gross domestic product (GDP).

Having identified the solution, one may argue that diversifying the sources of national income is the core objective of any economic policy developed by the State. Developing such policy would require taking a number of factors into consideration, namely the severeness of the climate, the population structure and the scarcity of natural resources, with the exception of oil.

In view of this, it may be readily concluded that the manufacturing industries sector is one of the best suited sectors to promote the national economy since it possesses the required elements. In the last two decades certain achievements have been realized in this respect. When the UAE was founded in 1971, the contribution of the manufacturing industries

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sector to GNP was only 2 percent, with a total value of Dh 200 million. By 1992 it increased to 8 percent with a total value of Dh 10 billion. This change took place gradually, and the private sector was the only source of financing until the mid-1970s, during which a number of small projects were established, in such areas as building materials, and food and beverages. No major ventures were established at this stage, and the State had not entered the sector as a prime investor.

With the gradual recognition of the economic importance of the State in the Gulf area, and the increase in oil revenues in the mid-1970s, the State played an intensive role in initiating and financing national industry along with the private sector. The entrance of the State into the industrial sector as an investor was not at all as a prospective competitor against the private sector. The State has only initiated and invested in huge projects in oil-sector and downstream industries. The private sector was able to develop its own investments in small- and medium-scale industries that have been historically associated with the oil sector, because of the availability of a wider range of facilities due to the increase in oil revenues.

Several types of governmental financing schemes are available to manufacturing industries, but they mainly cater to the large projects that are not promoted by the private sector. Direct investments made by the federal or local governments represent a major form of government financing, which has resulted in establishing a number of large industries such as aluminium, chemical fertilizers and oil downstream.

Despite the fact that the projects initiated by the government are small in number, they constitute the major portion of total industrial investment and produce almost 80 percent of the total value added. In addition, they employ modern technology and are capital-intensive. Therefore they are considered highly suitable for the State's economic and social conditions.

Table 1 indicates that total investment declined from Dh 5,700 million in 1985 to Dh 2,770 million in 1987, i.e. by 50 percent. This is

## Industrial investment in the United Arab Emirates

basically due to the slash in oil prices in 1986. When they rose once again in 1988, a new cycle of economic recovery commenced and affected almost every economic sector. Total industrial investment rose from Dh 2,770 million in 1987 to Dh 3,956 million in 1990. This represents an increase of 43 percent and reveals that growth in other economic sectors depends on oil revenues to a great extent.

As mentioned earlier, the public sector has initiated a number of large projects with the private sector through the organizations that are jointly owned by both sectors. These organizations are medium and large scale and are important to the national economy. The said projects have been launched in a variety of industries, such as cement, building materials, food and chemicals.

**Table 1. Investments in manufacturing industries  
in the UAE, 1985-1990**  
(Millions of Dh)

Descriptions	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
<b>Direct investment by:</b>						
Federal government	1	—	—	—	—	—
Local government	110	96	80	91	91	100
Indirect government investment	4200	3522	1790	2035	2225	2756
Private-sector investment	1389	1167	900	1024	1018	1100
<b>Total investment</b>	<b>5700</b>	<b>4785</b>	<b>2770</b>	<b>3150</b>	<b>3334</b>	<b>3956</b>

*Note:* Indicators provided by UAE government agencies. Dashes mean figures not available.

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The experience of joint-venture projects has received a great deal of recognition in recent years and has encouraged the promotion of additional projects. In 1992 the General Industrial Corporation (GIC), which is owned by the government of Abu Dhabi, offered five projects to be promoted jointly with the private sector. A part of the shares was to be held by GIC and the rest offered to the public.

Among the industrial sectors, aluminium and petroleum products are the most important, producing nearly 65 percent of value added. Next in rank come building materials, chemicals and food. This can be seen in the sectoral distribution of the number of factories in the State by 1992, which shows that factories engaged in the metal industry made up 27 percent of the total number of factories. Next come building material (non-metallic products), chemicals and food, representing 20 percent, 15 percent and 11 percent respectively.

**Table 2. Value added of the manufacturing industries for 1992**

	Value added (Millions of Dh)	Value added as a percent of total
Food, beverages and tobacco	700	7.2
Textiles, leather and ready-made garments	475	4.9
Wood, wood products and furniture	230	2.4
Paper, paper products and printing	270	2.8
Chemicals, petroleum products and plastics	5500	56.7
Non-metallic products	725	7.5
Metals	800	8.2
Metallic products and equipment	850	8.8
Others	150	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>9700</b>	<b>100</b>

## Industrial investment in the United Arab Emirates

The chemical and petroleum products sector accounts for the major share of manufacturing industries in the country. This sector is expected to continue in this position for the foreseeable future, as it depends on locally available oil and gas as raw material. Likewise, industries such as oil refining, gas liquefaction and chemical fertilizers will remain important.

After this sector comes the metals sector followed by the non-metallic sector, and in last place is the food and beverages sector. The availability of low-cost power was the major reason for the high ranking of the manufacturing sectors, and relatively high per-capita income placed the food and beverages sector in the fourth position.

The sectoral distribution of Emirates Industrial Bank loans among the manufacturing sectors shows a clear picture of the previous situation. By end of 1992 the shares of the major sectors were as follows:

	Percentage
Food and beverages	26
Metals	23
Chemicals	14
Building materials	10

It is worth mentioning that the recent expansion in the Dubai Aluminium Factory should increase the contribution of the metals sector in industrial value added.

As in any other developing country, industrial investments in the UAE face some difficulties; however, industry possesses the required elements for continuity, growth and success. Foreign competition, the small domestic market and the limited number of local opportunities constitute obstacles that may hinder the expansion of industrial investment, but it is beyond any doubt that this situation will not continue.

## **UAE INDUSTRY**

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Steps have been taken, not only within the UAE but also at the GCC level, to overcome these obstacles. Most prominent are the efforts to establish a unit to identify and promote projects. The lack of such a unit, as well as the limited number of industrial investment opportunities, has put pressure on other sectors such as real estate, trading and stocks:

To get around the problem of the domestic market's small size, efforts have been directed towards initiating export-oriented projects on the one hand and establishing joint projects among GCC countries on the other. This tendency is illustrated by the industrial development strategy developed recently by the GCC countries.

A number of studies have been conducted to lay the groundwork for a plan to protect national industries in a manner that takes into consideration the interest of all parties.

In conclusion, no matter how difficult it may be to overcome these obstacles, they must be solved. Diversifying the sources of income by promoting the non-oil manufacturing sectors has become inevitable, and in addition, investments in certain non-manufacturing sectors have reached the saturation point.

## **GERMAN FEDERALISM**

# 5

## ASPECTS OF GERMAN FEDERALISM\*

*Frauke Heard-Bey*

### THE PRECONDITIONS FOR A FEDERAL SYSTEM

A constitution should be a direct reflection of a State's or a nation's political and social reality. If a constitution projects a state of affairs which differs very much from the way the political machinery operates in the country, it becomes a worthless piece of paper. This is also why there is little point in adopting elements from perfectly worded federal constitutions of other countries and expecting this to work equally well in a completely different social climate. A federal system, for instance, can only function where the constituent parts have sufficiently well-developed characteristics in regard to their individual political life to make the act of federating possible. Each part must be able to assume the dual role of responding to the local as well as the federal political challenges.

German political reality has time and again found its most fitting expression in a confederal or a federal structure of some form. The purpose of this paper is to show at which point in time and under what

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\* This article was originally published in an Arabic translation as "Muqawwamat al-Ittihad al-Federali al-Almani" in *Dirasat fi al-Siyasat wa al-Tareekh*, 1974 (publication of the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs), pp. 27-61.



conditions the German political powers of the day opted for a federated organization. Every time a federal structure was chosen as the most appropriate form of organizing the political life of the German-speaking population in the heart of Europe, it was to avoid one of the two alternatives to the federated structure: either progressive centralization of all political powers or complete isolation of every part, some of which then risked being absorbed by a neighbour.

There are three principal reasons why throughout German history some form of federal structure offered itself as a means for balancing political groups. They are (in order of importance) the country's geography, its population pattern and—more generally—the impact of events of history at home and in neighbouring countries.

**Geography.** Germany has no natural boundaries. Its territorial extent is never indisputably defined. The principalities and States which emerged on German territory have always had two alternatives of political behaviour, either to cooperate voluntarily or forcibly with each other or to give way to the pressures and temptations of powerful neighbours surrounding German land on all sides. In contrast to the German geographical situation, mainland Britain's constituent parts, being confined to an island, were less successful in attempts to turn away from the unifying and centralizing forces, which gained momentum over the centuries.<sup>1</sup>

**Population.** The region which has come to be called Germany has for centuries been a highway of migration, a corridor for people moving from north to south, and a melting-pot for ethnic groups meeting each other across the rivers running mainly south to north. Therefore, there is no "German Nation." Germans of today trace their ancestors either to one of the Germanic, Frankish or Slavonic tribes which settled in various parts of the country, or to the mergers of ethnic origins which were left by

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<sup>1</sup> Where geographical setting and historical development offer an alternative, as for instance in Northern Ireland, the question of belonging has been contested throughout the centuries.

subsequent waves of settlers, conquerors, colonists, visitors and refugees. The Roman Empire at the time of Caesar and his successors faced across the Rhine and the Danube a multitude of tribes which had no common language, no common law, no common religion and no common leader. Isolated groups—often only one large family—lived in clearings in densely wooded country, making a living by hunting, fishing, farming and eventually some trading.<sup>2</sup>

German political life of today has certain characteristics which date back to this early history of settlement and colonization. Manifestations of regional differences of physique, temperament, dialect and cultural heritage are daily experiences for every German. The political manifestations of such differences are also impossible to overlook in the existence of regional particularism of the political bodies which exist now on the territory of earlier German States.

**History.** Historical events, which led at certain moments in time to the formulation of federal principles as a basis for political coordination are tied up with all the other strands of the area's history. In an attempt to extricate "federal" events from the general course of German history and to interpret their importance, it is useful to have recourse to federal constitutional theory and to state that federal or confederal principles serve one of two purposes: *either* to bring about a certain amount of organizational togetherness of political units or States which have been in existence as sovereign bodies before, *or* (in the case of the federal principle) to share the functions of a sovereign State in order to secure better performance in the execution of these functions for the whole of the country.

Both these "federal cases" presuppose the existence of either a number of individual bodies which can federate or of one political unit which, for political reasons of the time, needs to be reorganized while

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<sup>2</sup> For easy reference on the tribal make-up of the area, see Martin Bank, "Expansion of the Teutons", *The Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. I, chapter VII (1967).

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outwardly remaining an entity. Such constituent political bodies could be called principalities, States, countries, regions or nations.

In order to show how German federal events changed their meaning throughout the course of ten centuries under historically changing social and political conditions, it was found convenient to divide such events into five periods:

1. The period of the establishment of the federating constituents (until the "Golden Bill" of 1356).
2. The period of confederal coordination of the territorial powers (until the French Revolution of 1789).
3. The period when federalism served as a vehicle to national unity and liberalism (until the First World War of 1914-1918).
4. The period when federalism was subordinate to parliamentarism and centralism (in the Weimar Republic).
5. The period of federalism as a means to share the functions of the State in order to achieve the best possible living conditions for all citizens (after 1949).

The most important events of the first *four* periods form the first part of the Arabic version of this paper<sup>3</sup> in order to familiarize the reader with the development of the Germanic tribes into principalities, States and finally the *Länder*, which continued to be coordinated in a federal system of some form or another. The *fifth* period forms the second main part of this paper, in which the structural elements of the Federal Republic of

<sup>3</sup> In the English version of this paper only the fifth period is dealt with, under the assumption that the earlier history of federalism in Germany is known to the reader.

## Aspects of German federalism

Germany are described in some detail.<sup>4</sup> The treatment of these various German federating experiences is basically confined to one angle, that of comparison or contrast—if at all possible—with the conditions encountered in the formation of a newly-founded federation, such as that of the United Arab Emirates.<sup>5</sup>

### THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

#### 1. *Re-establishment of the federation*

The first unified German State in modern history, founded in 1871, was a federation. The Weimar Republic, which was established after the First World War in 1919, retained the federal structure as the foundation of its constitution. After 12 years of a centralized totalitarian regime and its capitulation in May 1945, the first sign of a return to German political autonomy was the establishment of a number of States in some of the occupied zones.

It was the general policy of the military administration in the western zones to let the redevelopment of national authority grow from the levels of local government upwards into the establishment of the States and eventually their federation. This view was shared by most German politicians who took part in the creation of the new West German

<sup>4</sup> Useful references to the latest developments can be found in a publication entitled *Meet United Germany*, Susan Stern, ed. (Frankfurt: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Information Services, 1991), in two volumes.

<sup>5</sup> The more comprehensive Arabic version of this paper, dealing also with the federal developments from tribal beginnings in the early Middle Ages to the second German Empire established in 1871, was first published in 1974 as "Muqawwamat al-Ittihadi al-Federali al-Almani" in *Dirasat fi al-Siyasat wa al-Tareekh* (*Studies in political science and history*), a collection of lectures delivered during the Diplomatic Seminar in Winter 1973/1974, published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the UAE, pp. 27-61.

State. For historical as well as current political reasons there was no question of it being anything but a federation.

It was hoped that a federal construction would also ease the way for the five States which had been formed in the Soviet-occupied territory to join a Western federation.

Thus, before the Federal Republic of Germany was created in 1949, all its constituent 11 States were already established. Freely elected assemblies in each one of them had passed constitutions for their respective States. The States were therefore in a position to have political parties and parliamentary elections, to form governments and to elect prime ministers.

Seventy delegates from all States and from West Berlin participated in the Parliamentary Council, which first met in Bonn in September 1948 to work out a federal constitution, called "Fundamental Law" (*Grundgesetz*). It was promulgated on 24 May 1949. After the first federal parliament (*Bundestag*) and the federal president had been elected, the newly-appointed federal chancellor (*Bundeskanzler*) could introduce his first cabinet on 20 September 1949. This date marked the birth of the Federal Republic of Germany.<sup>6</sup>

With the reunification of Germany on 3 October 1990—after the collapse of the German Democratic Republic in the east—the Fundamental Law became the basis of the constitutional existence of the entire country, and West Germany's formal name, the Federal Republic of Germany, was retained. It is characteristic of the importance which Germans attach to federalism, that even before unification, in a symbolic act of casting away the vestiges of communism, the totalitarian, centralistic nature of public life was swept away and eastern Germany's five regional States, which had been abolished in 1952, were reinstated.

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<sup>6</sup> See, for example, R.B. Tilford and R.J.C. Preece, *Federal Germany: Political and Social Order* (1969) or a study by the German professor of political science, Ralf Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy in Germany* (1967).

The territory of the Federal Republic of Germany is now the sum total of its 16 States, or *Länder*.

## *2. The federal character of the Republic*

Germany is a federation—not a union. The importance of this statement lies in the fact that the member States are not merely bodies endowed with certain rights of self-government and responsible to a central government. In the Federal Republic of Germany the 16 member States (*Länder*) each have all the characteristics of an autonomous State.<sup>7</sup> Through the act of federating, an additional, fully autonomous State was created, the Federal State (*Bund*). Each individual State has supreme sovereignty in those matters, jurisdiction over which is assigned to it by the Constitution (*Grundgesetz*).

The autonomous character of the 16 member States and of the additional combined Federal State cannot, however, lead to separate political developments or to great differences between the States: the Constitution reserves for the Federal State all matters in which separate developments would endanger the uniformity of the Federal Republic's political and moral foundation. The Constitution is the basis of all the authority possessed by the Federal State; it is also the basis of all authority of any of the member States. The relationship between them is entirely regulated by the Constitution as well.

Thus, one of the fundamental pronouncements of the Constitution with regard to the federal character of the Federal Republic of Germany is that on homogeneity. The Federal State and the 16 States are all bound to the same constitutional form, which must be "republican, democratic, social and based on law." This "democratic" element has to be understood and practised in the 16 States in the same way as it is defined

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<sup>7</sup> West Berlin was administered as one of the *Länder* of the Federal Republic of Germany, although it was not a constituent part of that Republic. It sent 22 elected members to Parliament and 4 deputies to the Federal Council but none of them could vote. These restrictions were vestiges of the agreements of the four occupying powers.

for the combined Federal State: democracy means the classic construction based on the division of powers within the State. In the Federal Republic of Germany, democracy does not mean the accumulation of powers as is the case in a "people's democracy." The federal character of the Federal Republic of Germany cannot be changed except by abolishing the Constitution.

The Constitution does not guarantee that all member States would remain forever unchanged in their territorial extent. They do not have to be equal in size or in economic or political strength. It is quite possible for two or more States to merge. It is considered a valuable democratic asset if there are big and smaller, rich and poorer States, which can combine on certain occasions or contest each other in a changing balance of State power.

The Constitution stipulates that all States and all their subdivisional units that provide for local self-government should have representative bodies of the population, which are to be elected in "general, direct, free, equal and secret elections." The Federal State is required by the Constitution to guarantee that the constitutional order in the 16 States conforms with the fundamental rights which are laid down in the first 19 articles of the Constitution. The Constitution gives the Federal State the legal and administrative means to enforce such guarantees if need be.

The German politicians of the post-war period, together with some of the British and American administrative authorities, formulated a clear concept of the ethical basis for the new State. Therefore, the Constitution is—above anything else—meant as an obligation to the political bodies and to every individual alike to safeguard equal quality of life, physical as well as spiritual, for all inhabitants. The Constitution-makers believed that a federal, rather than a centralistic structure would be the best organizational frame for serving the democratic and humanitarian goals which they set for the post-war Republic. The decision in favour of the federal principle took into consideration that Germans have usually identified themselves more closely with their regional State—often for

want of a strong central State, as was outlined previously.<sup>8</sup> It was therefore hoped that the traditional emotional attachment to the region would continue to lead to democratic involvement in the affairs of the State (*Land*, singular of *Länder*) as well as eventually in those of the Republic. Developments subsequent to the establishment of the Federal Republic in 1949 show indeed that the State governments are seen as very important political bodies and that elections to State parliaments raise as much political interest in the State and in Bonn as do federal elections.

The decision to create a federation also had practical aspects: It was the easiest way to combine in one supreme structure all the States (*Länder*), which already developed between 1945 and 1948 under the auspices of the United States and Great Britain. It was also seen as a way in which one could hope to integrate at some future date the territory in the east under Russian occupation. Instead, that part of Germany became the "German Democratic Republic," a centralistic State, which was subdivided in 1952 into 14 administrative units (*Bezirke*). This was a fundamental decision which was responsible for the two States on German soil growing apart further and faster in subsequent years, than if they had both been allowed at least to keep their ingrained federal character. Since the basic structural as well as the ideological principles of the two States were so different, complete reunification seemed unattainable until the unexpected collapse of the Soviet Union.

### 3. Division of responsibilities

#### (a) The legislative division

The legislative powers of the Federal State and those of the member States are shared according to the principle of exclusive federal legislation, concurrent legislation of the Federal States and cooperative legislation.

<sup>8</sup> See footnote 4.

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An enumeration of the fields of **exclusive federal legislation** is written into the Constitution. It concerns:

- Foreign affairs, defence and military service
- Affairs pertaining to matters of nationality
- Currency and other monetary matters, measures, weights and time
- Customs, trade and navigation agreements, exchange of goods and payments with foreign countries
- Railways, air traffic
- Postal matters, telegraphs
- Rights of the persons employed in the service of federal bodies
- Safeguarding of crafts and trades, the rights pertaining to creative work and publishing laws
- Cooperation of the Federal State and the member States in matters of crime
- Cases of violation of the Constitution and international actions against crime
- Federal statistics

In the above-mentioned fields, the member States have the power of legislation only if it is delegated to them by a federal law.

All other legislation is **concurrent legislation**, which means the member States are autonomous in these fields as far and long as the federal legislative machinery does not make use of its legislative rights. Here, the Federal State (*Bundesland*) can claim legislative right only if there is a genuine need for federal legislation. According to the Constitution such need would arise:

- If a matter cannot be regulated satisfactorily by the legislation of the individual member States;

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- If a member State's legislation would infringe on the interests of other member States of the community as a whole;
- If federal legislation is the only way to guarantee the legal and economic unity and especially the uniformity of conditions of life throughout the Federal Republic of Germany.

Although the field of concurrent legislation theoretically covers all subjects other than those mentioned in the Constitution as being strictly federal ones, there is a catalogue specifying well over four dozen items. If the Federal State does not legislate on any of the subjects because the above-mentioned constitutionally-defined need does not exist, it is the right and the duty of the member States to legislate. In any of these fields, however, legislation will always be in its entirety either federal or State.

The possibility exists for combined or **cooperative legislation**. In these cases the federal authorities issue a law which defines an outline only; the member States are requested to legislate the details. The fields in which such federal outlines are required are laid down in the Constitution and include subjects such as the rights of persons employed in the public service of the member States and of regional and local governments. The Federal State also legislates outlines for the rights of the press and the film industry, for matters involving hunting, the conservation of nature and the protection of the countryside, and for general distribution of land, regional planning and water economy.

### (b) Administrative division

The execution of all federal laws lies in principle with the administrative authorities of the 16 member States. Exceptions to this are stated in the Constitution. They concern foreign affairs, defence, federal finances, federal railways and mail service, public and social insurance foundations, and a number of federal institutions such as the Federal Bank (*Bundesbank*) and federal property (inland waterways, federal motorways,

etc.). The Federal State maintains its own administrative machinery throughout the Federal Republic of Germany to deal with these matters.

All other federally regulated matters are executed by the administrative machinery of the individual States on behalf of the Federal State, which, however, has the right to supervise and—if it sees fit—to interfere. Disagreements between the Federal State and a member State concerning the administration of federal laws are dealt with by the two parties concerned or by the Federal Council (*Bundesrat*), but can be taken to the Federal Constitutional Court (*Bundesverfassungsgericht*) as the highest authority.

In accordance with the principle of giving the individual States as much power as possible without affecting the unity of the Federal Republic of Germany, a great number of executive measures are entirely the responsibility of the States. There is, for instance, no federal police force except for the border police.<sup>9</sup> Education up to university level is entirely under the authority of the Ministry of Culture in every one of the 16 States. The Federal Ministry for Science and Education only gives outlines of educational policy and coordinates and supervises national research foundations. In principle, radio and television are regional establishments. They frequently cooperate on a nationwide scale for the sake of economy and for enhancing the quality of their productions.

### (c) Financial division

The Federal State (*Bundesland*) has exclusive right of legislation over and use of a number of revenues and taxes, such as customs and tax on commercial turnover.

The individual States collect and use property tax, inheritance tax, car registration fees and the like.

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<sup>9</sup> The organization for the protection of the Constitution is a federal one (*Bundesverfassungsschutz*). It works in close cooperation with the police forces in the States.

Taxes paid by corporations and the revenue tax paid by employed individuals are shared between the Federal State on the one hand and all the States together on the other according to a flexible formula of about 33 per cent to 67 per cent. Out of the total income of the States taken together, funds are allocated to the economically weaker States. When the economic situation of a State is assessed, it is also taken into account how much the regional local governments and the municipal authorities in that particular State collect from real estate tax, trade licences, etc.

The Federal State pays for all matters termed as federal—such as defence, etc. Its contributions to State administration are standardized for routing expenses.

### 4. *The Federal Council*

The 16 member States of the Federal Republic of Germany are represented in the Federal Council (*Bundesrat*). Through this body the States take part in the legislation and administration of the Federal Republic. Within the framework of the Republic's democratic division of powers, the Federal Council is the second house. The 68 (formerly 45) members of the Federal Council are cabinet ministers in their individual States (*Länder*) and are thus delegated by their respective governments—not by the State parliaments. The four members from West Berlin had no vote. Each State has at least three seats; depending on the size of the population they may have up to six seats. Votes are counted individually, but representatives of each State have to agree among themselves about which way to vote. The Federal Council elects its president for one year only. Apart from the routine sessions, the president calls the Council into session if the representatives of at least two States or if the Federal Cabinet request it. Decisions of the Council are taken by majority vote; its proceedings are public, but the public can be excluded. The committees of the Federal Council may be staffed by other delegates of the member States.

The members of the Federal Cabinet have the right, and on request it is their duty, to take part in the proceedings of the Federal Council. The

Federal Government has to keep the *Bundesrat* informed about how it runs all federal affairs.

Compared to its position in the federation of the Weimar Republic, the new Federal Council was given more political weight by the writers of the Constitution. It is involved in the election of the President of the Federation (*Bundespräsident*), for which purpose the complete Parliament (*Bundestag*) and all members of the *Bundesrat* form a Federal Assembly (*Bundesversammlung*).

The Federal Council functions as the representation of and guardian for the interests of the *Länder*. At the same time it can become a decisive counterbalance to the federal parliament and to government, which depends on the majority in parliament. Its political weight is seen most clearly when the majority of the *Länder* governments are dominated by the party in opposition. Matters are further complicated because the federal government and the majority of the State governments are made up of coalitions—often in opposing combinations.

### 5. Division of jurisdiction

Jurisdiction in the Federal Republic of Germany, like administration, is in principle the duty of the courts in the member States. The Constitution reduces this blanket authority in two ways: first, it orders the establishment of certain federal courts, and second, it establishes a system in which certain cases, which cannot be solved at the level of the jurisdiction of a State, can be—or must be—referred to one of the federal courts. The first of the relevant articles in the Constitution establishes a clear hierarchy of all courts. Article 29 states:

The power of jurisdiction is the responsibility of the judges. The power is executed by the Federal Constitutional Court, by the Highest Federal Court, by the federal courts which are established according to the Constitution and by the courts of the individual States.

The Federal Constitutional Court deals only with constitutional matters.

The Highest Federal Court's responsibility is to enforce uniformity of jurisdiction throughout the Federal Republic of Germany.

The Higher Federal Courts are established for jurisdiction in each of the following matters: regular jurisdiction, administration, labour, finances and social affairs. The Federal Administrative Court is of particular importance in safeguarding the unity, equality and fairness of all the actions of the executive powers. Thus every individual in the Federal Republic of Germany has the guarantee that administrative errors are legally pursued in a system which is separate from private, criminal or any other jurisdiction.

The Federal State (*Bundesland*) has the right to establish federal courts to deal with matters such as national military service, occupational protection and jurisdiction over federal civil servants and federal judges. None of the various Federal courts are situated in the federal capital, but following the traditional principle of decentralization of federal functions, they are distributed over a number of State capitals and smaller towns (the Federal Court of Finance is in Munich, the Federal Administrative Court resides in Berlin, the Federal Constitutional Court is in Karlsruhe).

The organization of the courts of the individual States and the choice of judges are not a federal responsibility. The courts have, however, the right and in some cases the duty, to refer to federal courts for the final decision. The nature of the courts in the States is similar to that of the federal courts, that is they are organized according to the matters with which they deal. Every State has its own constitutional court which deals with legal problems arising out of discrepancies between that State's constitution and the federal Constitution. If a court in a State considers a law which is relevant to a particular trial to be contrary to the constitution of that State or to the federal Constitution, the trial has to be postponed until the constitutional court of that State or the Federal Constitutional Court have reached a decision. Thus, laws which are

already in force can, at any time, be tested in order to guarantee that they conform with the highest authority in the Federal Republic of Germany, the federal Constitution.

### 6. *The Federal Constitutional Court*

The federal Constitution requires the establishment of the Highest Federal Court (*Bundesverfassungsgericht*) to guarantee a unified interpretation of law throughout the Federal Republic of Germany. Constitutional law, however, was not meant to fall under the jurisdiction of that court. The Federal Constitutional Court is therefore considered by some jurists as the supreme court, because it is the ultimate instance for testing the constitutionality of any and every law or regulation. Others hold the view that it is not only a court but a body for political decision-making because it has the ultimate authority to judge disagreements between any of the political institutions of the Federal Republic of Germany. The 107-article law which has regulated the details of the functions and practice of the Federal Constitutional Court since April 1951 have made it clear that this Court is meant to be more than a mere watchdog for the letter of the Constitution. It can concern itself only with matters which are open to a legal approach. But besides the actual text of the Constitution, the Constitutional Court also uses the unwritten moral principles which guided the conception of the Constitution. The Court is expected to be flexible enough to interpret the Constitution as a genuine expression of the society for which it was made. The Court thus protects the changing German society from becoming subjected to a progressively fossilized constitution. This duty also gives the Constitutional Court an eminently political responsibility.

The Federal Constitutional Court consists of two houses, each of which has eight judges as members. Three of the judges in each house have to come from a federal court. Half of the total number of 16 judges are elected by a two-thirds majority of the Federal Council, the other 8 being elected by the Federal Parliament for a period of eight years. The President of the Court and his deputy are elected by the Parliament and by the Federal Council in alternate order. Each of the two houses

concerns itself with those matters which are assigned to it by law. Certain cases have to be dealt with in plenary sessions of both houses.

Disputes concerning the relationship between the Federal State and the individual States form the majority of the cases which the Federal Constitutional Court has to deal with. There are procedural means to bring to its attention any dispute or discrepancy between federal and State constitutions, laws, administrative acts and jurisdiction. The court acts only upon request. Regulations specify when the Government, a State law court, the Federal Council or any other concerned body can initiate an investigation.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

Political reality in any federation is full of attempts to influence affairs in one of two extreme ways: either to dissociate the individual States from the whole and to fragment the federal structure, or to impose more central control and thereby undermine the federal structure. In the Federal Republic of Germany the federal structure has not only been able to withstand such attempts at eroding it, but it has become evident that the federal idea is accepted as one of the essential pillars for German political life at the end of the 20th century. The federal structure is of particular benefit in a number of important aspects:

(a) If a State the size of Germany with over 76 million inhabitants is centrally administered by delegating authority downwards from one level to the next, the chain of decisions from the top down to the lowest level becomes awash with red tape. In the reverse direction, this long chain of administrative clearing points endangers the confidence the administered public must have in the fairness and reasonable intention of the executive on all levels. Responses, complaints or initiatives from the individual could very easily lose their original impact on such a long way up. Placing the responsibility for most of the executive into 16 centres brings the administrators very much nearer to the administered population.



(b) The aim is to create equally favourable living conditions for all areas of the Federal Republic of Germany. This is helped, not hindered, by the reluctance to "manage" the State from one centre. The environmental and economic differences which exist between regions of the Federal Republic of Germany cannot be reduced effectively if laws and administrative measures are exactly the same everywhere. The attempt to standardize can have the effect of emphasizing, not levelling differences. The individual State is often in a much better position to legislate and administer in fields where there are differences. Through this it can bring itself into line with conditions obtaining in other States. The overall federal framework obliges the State governments to work towards eliminating disadvantageous differences. Where the States are not in a position to do so, the machinery of the Federation can step in.

(c) In planning centrally for a highly diversified industrial State like the Federal Republic of Germany, a great number of the not-so-obvious potentials, environmental dangers, human resources, etc., would be overlooked. The governments of the 16 States are in a far better position to assess such matters in their respective regions and to plan for their coordination in greater detail. The element of rivalry between the States is a healthy impulse for every one of the governments to try to be more efficient, more imaginative and more successful in certain fields than its neighbour—or than the Federal Government.<sup>10</sup>

(d) A healthy democracy thrives on the active participation of the citizens. To cast a vote in a federal election is for many people not an act of exercising their democratic rights to the fullest extent. The issues are often too complicated and too large to be fully grasped by anyone except the expert. But many issues of regional importance can be judged by most voters from personal experience. Here the citizen can express a

<sup>10</sup> For example, the Federal Republic of Germany has the highest number of theatres and other cultural institutions per capita in the world, a result of cultural rivalry among the regions, dating back to the days of the many independent kings and princes on German territory who competed with each other to be the best in all aspects of the culture of their time.

definite view with his or her vote—rather than just fall prey to party propaganda. Elections to the 16 regional parliaments are bound to bring a number of *Länder* governments into power which are manned by the party in opposition to the one which forms the Federal Government. This contributes to a more healthy balance of party power throughout the Federal Republic of Germany.

The democratic principle benefits from smaller units where the individual can be more involved. This is why side by side with the obvious strength of the federal idea, regional and municipal self-government have not lost any of their traditional importance as a field for democratic participation—as well as a training ground for many a future federal politician of national stature.

Long before democratic principles were given their due place in a federal constitution, they had already become the basis of many constitutional principalities in nineteenth century Germany. In France, liberalism and democracy were introduced by the centralistic State in Paris. In Germany, the realization of these ideas took place in many of the regional States simultaneously, but they were only later adopted by the federally centralized State. This longer tradition in the individual States of practising parliamentary democracy serves now as a valuable asset for the democratic life of the whole republic.

(e) The confederations formed on German territory in the Middle Ages were often the loosest form of political togetherness—in an area which had no natural boundaries—of populations which had little in common. Later confederations either served the interests of regional princes or were, as in the North German Confederation of 1866 or the Empire of 1871, ways to bring about national unity. In the present German State the federal principle serves the concept of finding the best way towards democratic and humanitarian equality.

(f) The political organization in the individual States, whose duty it is to promote the realization of this basic concept, may develop in such a way that the federal system of which they form a part is no longer a

safeguard of but rather a hindrance to this concept. In a healthy democratic system such situations could lead to voluntary centralization through the cooperation of at least some of the States and then to the establishment of a common new organization of the national State.<sup>11</sup>

Federalism as a principle for the political structure of a State cannot be an end in itself. Every federation where the governments and parliaments are motivated by a sense of duty to the population can be expected to experience changes in one or another direction—towards centralization or decentralization. They may sooner or later find that the federal principle is being eroded not by the powers at the centre but by the responsible political leaders of the members of the federation. A healthy federation in our century must therefore be seen as possessing a transitional status which leads to a greater sense of togetherness, to more voluntary cooperation and to eventual integration at the level of the members.

## ASPECTS OF UAE FEDERALISM

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<sup>11</sup> For this view on the transitional character of modern federations the author is indebted to Prof. von Beyme's enlightening, unconventional comparative study of federations.

## 6

### EMIRATES POLITICS OF THE PAST

*Mohamed Morsy Abdulla*

#### 1. The modern map of Oman region

After the fall of the Yaariba dynasty in Oman (1624-1741), the country was divided into two main political factions, the Ghafiri, after the name of its leader Mohamed bin Nasir al-Ghafiri, and the Hanawi, which were led by Khalaf bin Mubarak al-Hanawi.

The political division coincided with a political vacuum in the Gulf region due to the collapse of the Safavid dynasty in Iran in 1722 and the fall of the Yaariba family in Oman. Therefore, in the early eighteenth century, the Gulf region saw waves of tribal immigration from the inner Najd and Oman towards the coast; the Utub, for example, took up residence in Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait. On the Emirates coast, two tribal independent federations emerged, the first being the Qawasim who took Ras al-Khaimah as their seat of government and the Bani Yas who took Abu Dhabi as their capital. These two federations were influenced by the political thought of the time in Oman. The Qawasim sided with the Ghafiri faction and the Bani Yas adopted the Hanawi party.

As a result, the modern political map of south-eastern Arabia was formed, and these political entities were created: the sultanate of Oman, with Muscat as its capital, under Al Bu Sa'id, the Qawasim federation at Ras al-Khaimah and the Bani Yas federation headed by Al Nahyan in Abu Dhabi.

### 2. The Qawasim federation

The Qawasim family ruled the Qawasim federation, which included the Naim tribe in Ajman, the Shihuh in Rus al-Jibal, the Sharqiyyin in Fujairah and the Al Ali in Umm al-Qaiwain. The Qawasim sheikhs took Lingah on the Persian coast, and Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah on the Arab coast as their main centres of government.

Sheikh Sultan bin Saqr (1803-1866) dominated the politics of the Qawasim federation in the first half of the nineteenth century. His tribes adopted the tenets of Wahhabi. As the Qawasim established themselves as a commercial maritime power, they soon came to a conflict with their neighbours the Sultanate of Oman and their allies the British. They attacked British ships in the early nineteenth century in the Gulf. The British expedition in 1819 against the Qawasim destroyed the forts and large ships of Ras al-Khaimah, Umm al-Qaiwain and Ajman, and the treaties concluded individually in 1820 with each sheikh on the coast marked the beginning of decline for the Qawasim federation. Ajman and Umm al-Qaiwain became independent. By the early twentieth century Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah were divided as well, and in 1952 Fujairah was recognized as an independent Emirate.

### 3. The Bani Yas federation

Sheikh Shakhbut bin Dhiyah Al Nahyan (1793-1816), who in 1793 transferred the seat of the Bani Yas federation from Liwa oasis in the interior to the newly developed city of Abu Dhabi, was able to extend his authority to the Dhawahir tribe at al-Ain village in the Buraimi region.

The early attitudes of the Bani Yas towards the British, the Saudis and the Sultan of Al Bu Sa'id in Muscat differed markedly from those of the Qawasim, and broadly determined the subsequent history of their Emirate during the nineteenth century. Since Abu Dhabi economic interests lay mainly in the date groves at Liwa and in the pearl fisheries around Dalma Island, far from the navigation channel of the Gulf, the Bani Yas, unlike the Qawasim, had no conflict with the British at sea.

Again, unlike the Qawasim, they continued to adhere to the Maliki school of Islamic jurisprudence and did not adopt the Wahhabi doctrines. In fact, Sheikh Shakhbut bin Dhiyah's extreme bravery in resisting the massive Saudi invasions between 1800 and 1814 earned him, despite the small numbers of the Bani Yas federation, a place among the leaders of the Hanawi party in Oman. It also earned him friendly relations with the sultans of Muscat. This friendship became a traditional part of the external policy of Abu Dhabi and made an important contribution to the growth of the Emirate during the nineteenth century.

In 1833 the Al Bu-Falas tribe, a member of the Bani Yas federation and led by al-Maktum, migrated from Abu Dhabi to Dubai and settled independently there. However, the Emirate of Abu Dhabi reached the zenith of its power under Zayed bin Khalifah (1855-1909). A gallant warrior by nature, Zayed had also, during the time of his refuge in Dubai, learned the art of ruling, which enabled him to dominate internal politics in the Trucial States to extend his authority over the hinterland to the city of Ibri in the Dhahirah area, and to gain official British recognition for his sovereignty as far as al-Udai in the west.

### 4. The British and the Emirates

After the agreement of 1820, the British had very close relations with the Emirates. In 1853 a permanent truce agreement was concluded with the various sheikhs, and the coast was called thereafter in British official documents the Trucial Coast. By the end of the nineteenth century, owing to foreign powers' rivalry, the British concluded with the Trucial sheikhs the exclusive agreement of 1892. The rulers bound themselves, their heirs and their successors not to correspond with, cede to, sell or otherwise give for occupation any part of their territory save to the British government. The British pledged as well to protect the Emirates against any foreign aggression.

**5. The ruler and the merchants**

When the Qawasim and the Bani Yas federations were settled in Ras al-Khaimah and Abu Dhabi, they enjoyed considerable independence. The Ras al-Khaimah federation of tribes chose the Qawasim family for leadership, and the Bani Yas accepted the leadership of Al Nahyan family. Later, with the emergence of new Emirates, other ruling families appeared such as:

- Al Mualla ruling family in Umm al-Qaiwain
- Al Bukhriban ruling family in Ajman
- Al Maktum ruling family in Dubai
- Al-Sharqiyyin ruling family in Fujairah

There were four main developments in the economy of the Emirates in the early decades of the twentieth century:

1. Dubai emerged in 1903 as the main port of the coast after the fall of the Qawasim Emirate in Lingah on the Persian coast in 1899 and the migration of its traders to Dubai.
2. The flourishing pearl industry in the early decades of the twentieth century led to the emergence of a group of rich merchants who played an important role in the field of education and culture by establishing schools. This trade declined after 1930, with the introduction of the Japanese cultured pearl to the market and with the international economic crisis of that period.
3. Agricultural activity centred in Liwa oasis and al-Ain area in Abu Dhabi Emirate, the Sir area in Ras al-Khaimah Emirate and al-Dhaid area in Sharjah Emirate.
4. New sources of income were generated when the civil airport was constructed at Sharjah in 1933 and after the granting of oil concessions starting from 1936.

The ruling families, though well established, remained limited by the merchants' position in society. Owing to their financial power, the merchants had an important role in government and constituted an unofficial council which the ruler consulted in regard to major issues. The financial influence of the merchants came from their control of trade and imports, duties on which sustained the ruler.

The merchants and the heads of tribes usually employed migration to another Emirate as an expression against oppression. However, the sheikhs were quite aware of the dangers of such secession, which could reduce the sheikhdom's economic and military power. This helped promote justice in the Emirate, since emigration would undermine the reputation of the Emirate.

**6. Historical factors of the UAE federation**

In the late 1950s, the whole Arab world was caught up in a movement of liberation from foreign rule, which was accompanied by a desire for social and cultural reform. During the same period in the Gulf, the nationalization of APOC (Anglo-Persian Oil Company) in Iran, the beginning of the building of the modern States of Kuwait and Qatar, and the rise of the nationalist reform movement in Bahrain were all signs of a significant break with the past.

The tide of change in the Arab world and in the Gulf region soon had an impact on the Emirates, where the early indications of an awakening became visible. There was a desire—and a determination—for improved conditions, both economic and cultural, and this was the leading factor which engendered the changes that brought about the federation of 2 December 1971.

There were two fundamental developments during the 1950s: the beginning of modern education, with the help of Egypt, Kuwait and Qatar; and the growth of modernized Dubai. The advance made in the field of education was particularly noticeable in Sharjah and Dubai. During the 1960s, Sheikh Rashid bin Said established modernized Dubai,

with its municipality and hospital, and also developed education and helped advance work on the port. Dubai took the lead in the process of modernization during this period.

Work in the field of oil production progressed intensively in Abu Dhabi, with the first oil exports going out in 1962. After Zayed came to power in 1966, Abu Dhabi went through a stage of unprecedented rapid development. Sheikh Zayed's success in developing Abu Dhabi, together with his assistance to the neighbouring Emirates, increased his popularity in the area and gave the coming federation its leader and president.

Modernization and the various developments that constituted a break with the past brought an almost radical change in political thinking. The establishment of modern airports and direct contact between the coast and the outside world put an end to the isolation of the inhabitants of the Emirates. The split and rivalry between the Hanawi and Ghafiri factions, which had dominated the internal politics of the coast in the past, now disappeared. The influence of a widespread and growing belief in greater Arab unity encouraged a local feeling in favour of a federation of the States, which led eventually to the creation of the United Arab Emirates.

Certainly, the announcement by the British in January 1968 of their intention to withdraw completely from the Gulf by the end of 1971 brought the small Emirates face to face with the responsibilities that could result from independence. Sheikh Zayed, with his great popularity, and Sheikh Rashid, Ruler of Dubai, took the first step in February 1968 which led finally to the announcement of the creation of the United Arab Emirates on 2 December 1971.

## UAE POLITICS OF THE PRESENT

### THE CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

*Yousef Al-Hassan*

### INTRODUCTION

The Second World War and the following years had a profound effect on how the political and economic situation developed in the Gulf region: the strategic value of this area increased not only because of the discovery of oil but also owing to its geostrategic position. International competition, particularly between Britain and the United States, became more intense, and the importance of the Gulf rose as a means of global communication between the Middle East and the countries of East Africa, Asia and Australia.<sup>1</sup>

The discovery of oil in the coastal Emirates affected administrative and political developments there. Britain attempted to continue to isolate them and to directly control their affairs under the terms of the protection

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<sup>1</sup> Jamal Zakaria Qasim, *Al-Khaleej al-'Arabi: Diraasa li-Tareekhihi l-Mu'asir (The Arabian Gulf: a study of its contemporary history)* (Cairo: Institute of Arab Research and Studies, 1974), p. 16.

agreements that it had imposed on the Emirates. The British Foreign Office managed Gulf affairs directly beginning in April 1947, after the British decision to withdraw militarily from India.

Britain appointed a Resident with the rank of ambassador in Bahrain to manage the affairs of the Emirates of the Arabian Gulf at the same time that it converted the native agent into a political officer in the Emirate of Sharjah during the Second World War. This position was increased to the rank of political agent in 1953. The following year this post was transferred to Dubai, as the coastal Emirates continued to gain importance, and as British military airfields proliferated throughout the area. The internal independence of the Emirates existed only as a matter of form. The British Government carried on foreign relations with the Emirates and relations in areas connected with civil aviation and mail, but British authorities indirectly intervened in internal Emirates affairs by providing the Rulers with British advisers and employees.<sup>2</sup>

In 1952 Britain set up a council of Rulers of the littoral Emirates in an attempt to urge the Rulers to follow a unified policy in internal affairs. Britain imposed its own border settlements on the Emirates, who are still paying the price of this action in the form of border disputes. Britain set up a military force led by British officers with headquarters in Sharjah. This was later transformed into what was known as the Oman Scouts, which as of 1971 was considered the nucleus of the army of the Emirates federation. In 1965 Britain established a development office which was handed over to the council of Emirates Rulers. As political and economic developments in the Arabian Gulf region went forward, and as the potential, the resources and the prestige of the British Empire went into decline, Britain was forced to gradually relinquish its policy in the region, until in 1968 it reached the decision to withdraw, and to cancel all its treaties.

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<sup>2</sup> Sir Rupert Harry, *The Persian Gulf States* (Washington, D.C.: The Middle East Institute, 1959), p. 19.

After Britain announced its decision to withdraw from the Gulf region, there came to the fore a number of questions on the issues of regional security, the vacuum resulting from this new development, stability, border disputes and Iranian claims of ownership of some Arab islands in the Gulf. The rulers of the Emirates felt—as did the people of the area—that the continued existence of the Emirates as separate entities was untenable. The door was open to numerous conflicts and to instability; there was a political and security vacuum that made it difficult for Emirates to cope on an individual basis.

The thinking was that establishing a federation that would bring together the various Emirates would be an ideal solution to fill the vacuum within the region and to achieve its long-term political, economic and security objectives. The Ruler of Abu Dhabi, His Highness Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, played a fundamental role in shaping the idea of a union among the seven Emirates (Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Qaiwain, Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah) after the independence of Bahrain and Qatar was announced.

On 2 December 1971, the establishment of the United Arab Emirates was announced. It was a matter of course that the birth of the new State would be accompanied by the cancellation of all unfair treaties with Great Britain which had been concluded in the nineteenth century. The UAE became a member of the United Nations, the League of Arab States and other regional and international bodies and organizations. Thus, the federal union gave genuine expression to an intense grass-roots yearning and embodied an old desire among the people of the area, who shared the same religion, language, culture and history.

The first constitution of the State was provisional until a permanent constitution for the federation could be drafted and adopted which was in harmony with the political, social and economic conditions of the country. As the preamble of the Constitution stated, this document was a legacy from the Rulers of the Emirates collectively to the people of the Emirates, stemming from the desire to preserve society and safeguard its independence and freedom, with full awareness of the importance of

## ASPECTS OF UAE FEDERALISM

preparing the people of the Emirates for a free, honourable constitutional life on the way to a solidly established parliamentary democratic government.

The adoption of the provisional constitution and the founding of the federal union gave rise to a nation that was one State with one central Government. The provisional constitution guaranteed public rights and made the State responsible for providing basic services to the people.

### THE ORGANIZATION OF POWER

The provisional constitution of the United Arab Emirates stated that the federal State consisted of the following Emirates: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Qaiwain, Fujairah and Ras al-Khaimah. It also stated that the UAE was part of the Arab nation, and established Islam as the official religion and Arabic as the official language. According to the Constitution, the Emirates union formed a single economic and customs unit. Each Emirate continued to be in possession of its wealth and natural resources. The union assumed dominion over all the territory and territorial waters of the member Emirates.

Article 45 of the provisional constitution of the UAE stated that federal authority was comprised of:

1. The Federal Supreme Council of Rulers
2. The President and Vice-President of the Federation
3. The Federal Council of Ministers (the Cabinet)
4. The Federal National Council
5. The federal judiciary

The power vested in each of these authorities can be divided into three groups:

1. Executive authority, including the Federal Supreme Council, the President and Vice-President of the Federation, and the Cabinet.

## UAE politics of the present

2. Legislative authority, comprising the Federal National Council.
3. Judicial authority, which is exercised by the federal judiciary.

### A. Executive power

A review of the constitutional arrangement of the State shows that political power is centred in the Federal Supreme Council of Rulers, which is composed of all the Rulers of the Emirates, or of whoever takes their place when they are absent. The Council operates on the principle of collective leadership, with each member having one vote. It meets once a year, and decisions on substantive issues are adopted on the basis of a qualified majority of five of the seven members of the Supreme Council. The Constitution stipulates that Abu Dhabi and Dubai must be among this majority. The minority is then bound to the majority opinion. On decisions related to procedural issues, a simple majority suffices.

The Supreme Council is the highest authority of the land. It is the seat of executive power and of the authority for the highest-level planning of political and administrative matters. The Supreme Council selects the President and Vice-President of the Federation from among its members, to serve for a period of five years, and also agrees to the recommendations of the President for the appointment of the Prime Minister, who suggests the members of the Council of Ministers. The Council is in charge of the executive body of the Federation under the control of the President of the Federation and the Supreme Council, with the Council of Ministers being responsible for the general domestic and foreign policy of the State and answering to the President. This Council of Ministers is expected to act as a coherent political unit, its members linked in a tie of solidarity.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Sayed Mohammed Ibrahim, *Tanzeem al-Sulta fi Dawlat al-Emarat* (The organization of power in the Emirates) (Abu Dhabi: Ministry of Information and Culture, 1976), p. 26.



The political system of the UAE revolves around three main axes: the Supreme Council, the President and the Cabinet, making it close in form to the parliamentary system. The President has two functions: he is the **President of the State**, which is equivalent to the head of State in a parliamentary system; in this capacity he heads the Supreme Defence Council and represents the Federation at home and abroad. He is also **President of the Supreme Council of Rulers** and carries out his functions through the Council.

The Cabinet in the UAE does not have the same functions that it would under a parliamentary system, because the most important functions in drawing up State policy have been shifted to the Supreme Council; the UAE Cabinet carries out limited administrative functions as well as other functions of a political nature, such as ratifying treaties, declaring war to defend the country, promulgating ordinary regulations, etc.

The merger of the member Emirates is no longer considered a union of individual States; rather, the members have become internal constitutional units, with the Constitution allowing for an internal administrative bloc and a strengthening of the foundations of the Federation, until it became at last a single unified State. Now the United Arab Emirates are considered a composite federated State.<sup>4</sup>

The Constitution is flexible, to the point of allowing individual Emirates to contract limited treaties of a local nature with the countries that border them. This allowance is an example of extraordinary authority, however: the Constitution places foreign affairs in the hands of the federal authorities. The extraordinary authority referred to here is subject to a number of restrictions, among them that the agreement not clash with the interests of the Federation or with federal laws and that the Supreme Council be given advance notification of the agreement. If the Supreme Council is against concluding the agreement, the matter is delayed until the Federal Court deals with the objection.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 68.

### B. The Federal National Council

The political system of the Emirates includes the Federal National Council, which comprises 40 members who represent the various Emirates. Each member is selected by the Emirate he represents, and each Emirate decides upon its own selection process. Members serve for two years. The Constitution establishes the distribution of seats among the Emirates: Abu Dhabi and Dubai have eight apiece, Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah each have six seats and each of the remaining Emirates has four.

The functions of the Council involve making recommendations. The Government keeps the Council informed about any treaties or international agreements it enters into with other countries. Drafts of federal laws are seen by the Council before being passed to the Federal Supreme Council. The National Council debates these bills and must either endorse, amend or reject them. It also reviews the bill on the public budget of the Federation.

Clearly, the powers of the Federal National Council are limited; it has no right to levy federal or other taxes. There is no doubt, however, that the practical experience that the country has gone through since its founding in 1971, besides the advances it has made and the human development it has achieved, calls for evolving the Federal National Council into a genuine parliamentary system that would be commensurate with the social, economic and educational development that has taken place in the UAE, that would be in keeping with Arab and Islamic cultural conventions, and that would be in harmony with the realities of the current age. Broad segments of officials and private citizens feel that the time has come to expand the powers of the Federal National Council and also to review the process for appointing Council members.

### C. Judicial power: The federal judiciary

The Federal Supreme Court is the highest judicial authority in the land. The constitution states that the President of the Federal Supreme

Court and its judges may not be dismissed once they are appointed. The duties of the Court include judging different disputes between the Emirates who are part of the Federation and monitoring the constitutionality of federal laws and legislation and of the legislation adopted by individual Emirates. The Court has the right to question ministers and senior officials, and adjudicates in disputes concerning the jurisdiction of the federal judiciary and the local judicial bodies in the individual Emirates; it also interprets constitutional provisions and treaties.

The Federal Supreme Court is thus the highest and most important court. It is a constitutional body that is independent of both the federal Government and the local authorities of the State and that tries to achieve a balance between these two so as to realize the objectives of the constitution.<sup>5</sup> There are other federal courts that have the power to rule within their jurisdictions, and the Constitution also established a federal attorney general's office as well as a law regulating its authority, functions and procedures.

Despite the high level of progress and development that the judiciary has achieved in this short period of time, the expansion in scope and depth in the processes of development and modernization requires faster adaptation of many constitutional texts concerned (1) with incorporating the local judiciary with the federal judiciary and (2) with formulating constitutional guarantees for the independence of the judiciary, so that no authority could interfere in issues of due process and also to guarantee the security of judges, the special provisions related to them and their permanent tenure in office.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Group of members of the teaching faculty of Emirates' University, *Studies in Emirates Society* (Abu Dhabi: Emirates' University, 1988/1989), p. 274.

<sup>6</sup> Abdel Wahab al-Azraq, *Mawjibat Ta'deel al-Dustoor al-Mu'aqat bi-Dawlat al-Emarat* (The necessity of amending the provisional constitution of the UAE) (Abu Dhabi: Ministry of Information and Culture, 1976), p. 120.

## II. ARAB AND GERMAN POINTS OF VIEW

### FOREIGN POLICY

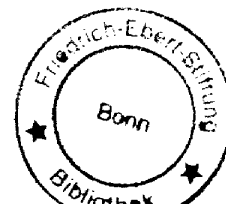
## THE MIDDLE EAST POLICY OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

*Andrä Gärber*

Before attempting a description and evaluation of the Middle East policy of Germany since 1949, it is essential to elaborate on the most important stages of Germany's foreign policy. Based on this information, the potential as well as the limitations of German policy on the Middle East become clearer and more comprehensible.

### I. THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY: THE POLITICAL FRAMEWORK OF WEST GERMANY'S MIDDLE EAST POLICY

The imperialistic adventure of the National Socialists ended in catastrophe, with the total military, political and moral collapse of Germany. After the unconditional surrender of the German army on 8 and 9 May 1945, the victorious Allied forces—the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and France—took over power in what had been the territory of the former German Reich on 5 June 1945. The Allied powers partitioned Germany and the capital, Berlin, into military zones.



It was the expressed wish of the Allied powers to put a final end to all German dreams of becoming a world power, especially since these aspirations for power had been the cause of two world wars, in 1914 and again in 1939. Their intention was to allow Germany to exist only as a weakened hull of a State, and to destroy German militarism, punish the Germans—economically and politically—for the genocide and war crimes of the Nazis and re-educate the population in the democratic spirit.

However, as early as 1945 this Allied coalition based on mutual interest broke up. The Western Allied powers answered Stalin's expansive Sovietization of Poland and south-eastern Europe, which he had initiated even before the end of the war, with a strategy of containment. The reconstruction of West Germany was part of the gigantic European Recovery Program. This plan was also called the "Marshall Plan" after the American Secretary of State in office at the time. The United States had already begun work on this plan in the summer of 1947. Against the backdrop of the global conflict between the Western democracies and the Soviet brand of communism, its purpose was to initially bolster that part of Europe not under Soviet rule against the influences of communism through economic support and resulting political stability.<sup>1</sup>

The containment strategy of the West was successful. However it had its price: the subsequent division of Germany, a symbol of the cold war. In 1949 the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) were established on German territory. The FRG was formed as part of the Western democratic world and the GDR was set up as a satellite under Soviet communist rule. As early as 1949, as the official successor of the German Reich, the newly formed FRG defined its most important foreign policy goals as the following: sovereignty, reunification, and security through integration with the West as well as reparation and reconciliation. The FRG systematically adhered to this *Westpolitik* under Chancellor Adenauer (1949-1963).

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<sup>1</sup> Hermann Graml, "Die Aussenpolitik" in Wolfgang Benz, ed., *Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Geschichte in drei Bänden*, Band 1, *Politik* (Frankfurt, 1983).

By the mid-1950s the West German State had already reached some of its most important goals established in 1949. It had obtained full sovereignty as a State (the Treaty of Paris, 5 May 1955), security through integration with the West (membership in NATO, 9 May 1955, and a founding member of the European Economic Community [EEC], in the signing of the Treaty of Rome, 25 March 1957) and reconciliation (reparation agreement with Israel, 1952).

However, the greater West Germany's success, through its alignment with the West, the more obvious it became that in reality this policy contributed to the overall stabilization of the status quo of the outcome of the Second World War. The FRG was doomed to participate in the undermining of its most important goal: the reunification of Germany. The Soviet Union had already reacted to the formation of the FRG with the establishment of the GDR. Then the admission of the FRG to the OEEC (10 October 1949) and the European Council (8 July 1950) was answered by the admittance of the GDR to the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) (9 September 1950). After the Federal Republic had gained its sovereignty and had become a member of NATO, the Soviet Union immediately followed with its own answer to NATO, the signing of the "Warsaw Pact" on 14 May 1955. This treaty set up an organization for the defence of the Soviet bloc countries, which included the GDR. On 20 September 1955, the Treaty of Moscow was signed by the USSR and the GDR. With this treaty, the Soviet leadership granted their German satellite State sovereignty.

After the signing of the Treaty of Moscow, the Federal Republic saw that its position as the sole inheritor of the right to represent the former German Reich was in jeopardy. On the international scene, the FRG attempted to bolster its policy of non-recognition of the GDR through the so-called Hallstein Doctrine. The Federal Government threatened to discontinue relations with every country which maintained or planned future diplomatic relations with the GDR. Through the Hallstein Doctrine, the FRG succeeded in isolating the GDR from a large part of the rest of the world. This situation lasted until the end of the

1960s. Because of the Hallstein Doctrine, a normalization of relations with the countries of the Soviet bloc was *de facto* impossible.

The social-liberal coalition under Willy Brandt (1969-1974) introduced a new era in the foreign policy of the FRG, the *Ostpolitik*. Its creed "change through *rapprochement*" had been formulated by Egon Bahr in 1963.

Based on the acceptance of the status quo, *Ostpolitik* meant the normalization of relations with Eastern Europe. The Federal Republic let go of its resolute political demands of the East, which included territorial claims to parts of East Prussia, Pomerania and Silesia in particular. In so doing it helped pave the way for the signing of the Treaty of Moscow with the Soviet Union (12 April 1970), the Treaty of Warsaw with Poland (7 December 1970) and the Treaty of Prague with Czechoslovakia (11 December 1973).

On 12 December 1972 a treaty establishing the basis for relations between the two Germanys (*Grundlagenvertrag*) was signed by the Federal Republic and the GDR. It was not the intention of the FRG to recognize the two-State theory as legitimate and correct. However, in signing this treaty it did recognize the situation as a reality.<sup>2</sup> On 18 September 1973 the two German States became members of the United Nations. The *Ostpolitik*, just like Adenauer's earlier *Westpolitik*, contributed to the stabilization of the outcome of the Second World War.

The 1970s was a decade of improvement in East-West relations, which came to a climax in 1975 with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). It was followed by the 1980s, which began with an escalation of the East-West conflict: the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the declaration of martial law in Poland and the NATO two-track decision.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 368.

In the mid-1980s, however, there was a radical change in the strained East-West relations. Michael Gorbachev triggered a process of reform in the USSR and the countries of the Eastern bloc through *glasnost* and *perestroika*. This, in turn, had an unforeseeable impact on the global political scene. By 1986 Gorbachev made the destruction of all nuclear weapons by the year 2000 his most important political goal. When Hungary finally opened its western border to Austria in September 1989, the foundations of the Warsaw Pact were shaken.

The peaceful revolution against the foundations of the East German State—the command economy, the Stasi (secret police) and the all-powerful SED (the East German communist party)—had slowly gained momentum over the years and was supported by the churches and by citizens' movements. The massive exodus of GDR citizens to the West through Hungary made the reunification of Germany seem possible for the first time in 40 years of division. First, however, the reservations of the West European neighbours—France and the United Kingdom in particular—had to be dealt with. The original purpose of integrating Germany into Western Europe had not only been to serve as a fortress against communism but to subdue the country as a power. A reunified Germany would upset the balance of power in the EC to the disadvantage of the other member countries and would entirely change the political landscape of Europe. Gorbachev and Bush succeeded in dispelling these doubts by signing agreements on the reduction of German troops and the promise that Germany would remain a member of NATO after reunification.

The reunification of Germany became a reality on 3 October 1990. It was based on the so-called Two Plus Four Treaty (signed by the Federal Republic and the GDR as well as the four Allied powers of the Second World War) and the Unification Treaty between the FRG and the GDR according to article 23 of the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany. As a result, a unified Germany regained full sovereignty over its internal and external affairs 45 years after the fall of the Nazi regime.

## FOREIGN POLICY

Since reunification, Germany has essentially pursued one main goal: the integration of the FRG and GDR in political, economic and social matters. However, this is a task which cannot be completed within one generation.

The strengthening and development of integration in the European Union, the renewal of relations with the former East bloc countries and the establishment of Germany's role within the system of the United Nations are at the top of the foreign policy agenda of reunified Germany. It is a nation in search of its new role in the world, between a normal nation and one of the world's Great Powers.<sup>3</sup>

This brief—and therefore greatly oversimplified—history of German foreign policy has made it clear that West Germany always strived towards one specific goal, the reunification of Germany. All other foreign policy matters took second place. This was also the case where the Middle East policy of the Federal Republic was concerned.

### II. THE MIDDLE EAST POLICY OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY: A DEFINITION

As defined by the Foreign Ministry, German Middle East policy covers the countries between the Persian/Arabian Gulf and the Atlantic: Iran, the Arab world and Israel. Despite its current political conflicts, this is a region that has been influenced by strong mutual historical and cultural ties over longer periods of time. Therefore, it seems justifiable to classify German foreign policy for this region under one general heading. The phrase *Deutsche Nahostpolitik* (German Middle East policy) stands for the entire range of German foreign relations with the following geographic regions:

<sup>3</sup> Peter Glotz, "Rokoko-Saal-Politik, Notizen zur deutschen Aussenpolitik nach 1989", in *Die Neue Gesellschaft Frankfurter Hefte*, 40. Jahrgang, Band 7, p. 604.

## The Middle East policy of the FRG

- The countries of the Near East: Syria, Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel (the West Bank and Gaza Strip and annexed East Jerusalem)
- The Middle East: Iran, Iraq, the GCC States (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman) and reunited Yemen
- The North African Maghreb countries: Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Sudan.<sup>4</sup>

Without a doubt, the wish to contribute to the peaceful settlement of conflicts in this region and create new opportunities for cooperation based on equality and the mutual exchange of ideas and interests is at the heart of German Middle East policy. The quality (effectiveness) of German Middle East policy can be measured by the contributions it has made toward solving the Arab-Israeli conflict, which has dominated the Middle East since the end of the Second World War. At the heart of this conflict lies the question of Palestine.

### III. THE MIDDLE EAST POLICY OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY: AN OVERVIEW

After the end of the Second World War, one of the main goals of the Federal Republic's "Middle East Policy" was to restore its relations with Israel, the Jewish State where many Jews had found refuge from the persecution brought on by the National Socialist brand of racism.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Auswärtiges Amt (Hrsg), *Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Nahe Osten, Reihe: Berichte und Dokumentationen* (Coburg, 1987), p. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Udo Steinbach, "Freundschaft und Frustration - die deutsch-arabischen Beziehungen", in Udo Steinbach, ed., *Arabien-Mehr als Erdöl und Konflikte* (Opladen, 1992), p. 224.

Under Konrad Adenauer it was generally felt that Germany could prove its conversion from a nation of blind followers of National Socialism to a legitimate democracy by immediately initiating a programme of material reparation to pay for the Nazi crimes against the Jews. In so doing they also hoped to regain admittance to the international community as a recognized nation.

At the same time, where the Arab States were concerned, the crimes of the National Socialists triggered a development which ended in the establishment of the State of Israel in the heart of the Arab world. For this reason the Arabs had little sympathy for the efforts of Germany to "cleanse" its own past by granting material reparation to the State of Israel, which changed the balance of power in the Arab-Israeli conflict by strengthening Israel's overall position. However, the Federal Republic was able to justify the signing of the Reparation Treaty with Israel in 1952 without greatly tarnishing its reputation with the Arab States.

During the Suez crisis in 1956, the East-West conflict spread to the Middle East. The USSR aligned itself with the Arab States against Israel. Although the USA supported Israel it did not align itself against the Arab States. The European powers of Great Britain and France also supported Israel against the Arab cause. The Federal Republic subscribed to the position of the Western power—the USA—but played a relatively neutral role in the actual conflict.<sup>6</sup> The American point of view that the Middle East policy of the West is directly equivalent to American Middle East policy was reinforced during the Suez crisis and still holds true today.

As early as 1956, it was clear that West German Middle East policy would be plagued by an unresolvable conflict of interests. On the one hand the FRG tried to enforce its policy of "non-recognition" in the Near East: with the Hallstein Doctrine, West Germany hoped to block the recognition of the GDR by the international community. On the other

<sup>6</sup> Peter Hünseler, *Die aussenpolitischen Beziehungen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zu den arabischen Staaten von 1949-1980* (Frankfurt, 1990), p. 89.

hand, the FRG was legally bound by the Reparation Treaty it had signed with Israel.

Therefore, if West Germany was going to maintain its adherence to the Hallstein Doctrine it could not avoid coming under increasing pressure from both sides: from the Arab States which threatened to support the GDR on the international scene if diplomatic relations were established with Israel and from Israel, which wanted to see its dealings with the FRG freed from its policy of conciliation towards the Arab States. Therefore West Germany had the choice of either giving up its adherence to the Hallstein Doctrine or making secret concessions. Initially the FRG followed the latter course of action. In 1957 the Federal Government made secret arms deals with Israel.

When this became public in 1960, the Arabs could no longer muster much sympathy for West German Middle East policies. They discontinued their relations with the Federal Republic when Bonn and Jerusalem established diplomatic relations in 1965.

For many Arab countries, the other Germany, the GDR, became the "good" Germany, particularly for those States which had taken a "progressive" or socialistic path of development.

The leadership of this new German proletarian State refused to commit itself to the Jewish cause which had been born of Nazi oppression. After the June war of 1967, East Berlin developed an especially critical attitude towards Israel, while sympathy for the Jewish State reached its peak in West Germany.

Relations between the FRG and the Arab States gradually began to normalize starting from the early 1970s. The resumption of diplomatic relations in 1974 was an indication of West Germany's increasing awareness of the realities of international politics: the FRG had slowly shifted from the position of "sole sovereignty" to the two-State theory. The Arab world finally realized after the end of the fourth Middle East War in 1967 that the existence of Israel was a reality.

The coalition of social democrats and liberals under Willy Brandt introduced for the first time the concept of a "balanced approach" to Bonn's policy towards the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict. At the same time Germany was given the chance to revise its Middle East policy, through the efforts of the European Community to coordinate Middle East policy within the framework of European Political Cooperation (EPC).<sup>7</sup>

EPC Middle East policy was introduced in Paris in May 1971. It was first presented in a working paper written by European foreign ministers. It was finally made official on 16 June 1980 in the European Parliament's Declaration of Venice<sup>8</sup> and saw further development with the Proclamation of Madrid on 27 June 1989. However, the European Middle East policy remained primarily a policy of declarations since it was burdened with three serious handicaps: the lack of consensus, a shortage of political resources and the lack of widespread popularity. It is virtually impossible to reconcile the individual interests of the 12 member States of the EC in one European Middle East policy, let alone ask these countries to come to a consensus on a common foreign policy and general policy for European security. The EPC does not have the political power to guarantee the success of a political solution in the Middle East. If the worst came to the worst, Europe could not protect Israel. For this reason, Israel feels that Europe's Middle East policy is not only ineffective but dangerous. Since the Suez crisis in 1956, the Americans view the Europeans primarily as troublemakers. This American attitude, still currently popular, was particularly obvious in 1974 when U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger voiced the suspicion that the Europeans had aligned themselves with the Arabs against America.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Steinbach, "Freundschaft und Frustration", 224f.

<sup>8</sup> Rüdiger Robert, "Die Nah- und Mittelostpolitik der Europäischen Gemeinschaft", in Udo Steinbach and Rüdiger Robert, eds., *Der Nahe und Mittlere Osten, Band 1: Grundlagen, Strukturen und Problemfelder* (Opladen, 1988) 796ff.

<sup>9</sup> Udo Steinbach, "Europa und der Konfliktherd Naher Osten", in Udo Steinbach, ed., *Arabien, Mehr als Erdöl und Konflikte* (Opladen, 1992), p. 218.

During the first and second Gulf wars, it became clear just how short-winded and ineffectual the European Middle East policy really was, particularly during the second war, when the Europeans meekly joined the ranks of the Americans. Although Germany did not participate directly in the second Gulf war, it supported America's anti-Iraq alliance with 11.38 billion Deutschmarks (DM) in financial aid, DM 3.68 billion worth of military and technical aid and DM 540 million for logistics and transportation.<sup>10</sup> Even in the current Middle East peace process launched in Madrid in October 1991, the EC plays the role of a subordinate in these politically ineffective multilateral talks.

Germany's current Middle East policy was developed in cooperation with the EPC. Its balanced approach is based primarily on the equal handling of Israel's need for security and the Palestinians' right to self-determination. Germany has used this position as a "protective shield" since the beginning of the 1970s.

However, Bonn had good reason for remaining deliberately noncommittal in its Middle East policy when it came to taking a stand on matters of Arab concern.

Bonn shared many interests with Israel, and it was not difficult to take a definite stand in these matters. Israel's wish for secure and officially recognized borders was placed at the top of the list in Bonn's catalogue of priorities. Where the Arab side was concerned, Bonn propagated a right which could easily be reconciled with the German position and at the same time allow for a noncommittal stance: the Palestinians' right to self-determination.

Since West Germany supported the right to self-determination for its own citizens, this principle was well suited to serve as an "opening" when dealing with Arab demands. However, the demand for self-determination remained meaningless since it was never propagated in

<sup>10</sup> Deutsches Orient-Institut, ed., *Nahost Jahrbuch 1991* (Opladen, 1992), p. 17.



combination with the concepts of identity and sovereignty which constitute the basis of an independent State.<sup>11</sup>

Until now, Germany has not taken this important step. Therefore, a policy has been propagated which in spite of being labelled a "balanced approach" remains basically pro-Israeli. In this sense the new Middle East policy is not balanced. However, it is an improvement over the German Middle East policies of the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>12</sup>

### IV. THE MIDDLE EAST POLICY OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

West Germany's extreme political discretion where the conflict in the Middle East is concerned has its roots in the unresolved relationship of the Germans to their past and to the State of Israel. The process of "overcoming the past", politically speaking, was undergone almost exclusively for the sake of demonstrating Germany's loyalty to Israel.

After 1949, the policy of West German Governments was aimed at being exonerated by the victims of the Third Reich. This was done instead of concentrating on prevention and on initiating a campaign against a repetition of National Socialist and anti-Semitic crimes. This could have provided a basis for "overcoming the past" independent of who or what was the cause of injustice and oppression.

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<sup>11</sup> Peter Coulmas, "Das Problem des Selbstbestimmungsrechts, Mikronationalismen, Anarchie und innere Schwäche der Staaten", in *Europa Archiv*, 48. Jahr, Folge 4 (1993), p. 86.

<sup>12</sup> Peter Hünslers, *Die aussenpolitischen Beziehungen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zu den arabischen Staaten von 1949-1980* (Frankfurt, 1990), p. 185.

However, the Federal Republic never received this absolution. Rather one finds a sense of "bafflement"<sup>13</sup> in the relations between the FRG and Israel, which can best be described as cramped. This feeling still prevails despite all efforts on the part of West Germany to improve the situation by passing laws, making financial payments in accordance with the Reparation Pact of 1952 and the Federal Law for War Indemnity and supporting political and constitutional measures, and despite all the types of psychological training and educational programmes supported by Germany.<sup>14</sup>

The case is quite the opposite: the lapse in time between the Third Reich and today's world has not resulted in an attitude of historic detachment from the horrors of the Third Reich. The impact of the Holocaust on the hearts and minds of modern man seems to become more powerful with the passage of each year. It should be added that this seems to be true not only of the Israeli and Jewish perspective but also of the German and universal view of the Holocaust. And while this process appears to take place at the subconscious level of German and/or non-Jewish populations, it is deliberately cultivated and used by the Israelis to their own advantage.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The difficulty involved in understanding and describing the scope of the history of German-Jewish relations can be appreciated only when one attempts to find a word that accurately describes the extent of the genocide to which the Jews were subjected. Peter Steinbach, "Zur deutsch-juedischen Beziehungsgeschichte im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert", in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, Beilage zur Wochenzeitung Das Parlament*, 3. January 1992, p. 112.

<sup>14</sup> Peter Dudek, " 'Vergangenheitsbewältigung' , Zur Problematik eines umstrittenen Begriffs", in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, Beilage zur Wochenzeitung Das Parlament*, 3. January 1992, p. 47.

<sup>15</sup> Moshe Zimmerman, "Die Folgen des Holocaust fuer die israelische Gesellschaft", in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, Beilage zur Wochenzeitung Das Parlament*, 3. January 1992, p. 34.

Israel's resentful reaction to the position taken by Germany during the second Gulf war must be seen against this background. The combination of factors such as shipments of poison gas to Iraq and the peace demonstrations in Germany were devastating to German-Israeli relations in view of the threat to Israel from Iraq. The Scud rockets which came down on Tel Aviv were proof enough for many Israelis that the desire to annihilate the Jews had not disappeared after Auschwitz and never would. The great increase in the frequency of vulgar national socialist and racist upheavals in reunified Germany increased Israeli fears and could only further cramp the style of the Middle East policy of Germany.

One should also keep in mind that the special relationship of Germany to the State of Israel leaves practically no room for a satisfactory political balance in the Middle East conflict and in addition undermines political relations with the Arab States. Therefore, in the past, none of the governing parties<sup>16</sup> in West Germany—the Social Democratic Party (SPD), the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), the Christian Social Union (CSU) of Bavaria and the Free Democratic Party (FDP)—could afford not to cultivate a “special relationship” with Israel through its Middle East policy. Criticism of Israel for disregarding international law and for violating human rights was rarely made, out of fear of being labelled anti-Semitic.

The SPD was the party which was most unified in its positive stance towards Israel. The common interests of German Social Democracy and the socialist pioneers of Zionism, and the contribution of Jewish Social Democrats to the history of the German labour movement, created a deep—even sentimental—feeling of solidarity which made a realistic discussion of the conflict in the Middle East practically impossible. In addition to this, there were differences in ideological

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<sup>16</sup> Due to space constraints, only those parties have been listed which have been in power at one time or another and actively participated in West Germany's Middle East policy. The sympathies of the remaining political parties range from pro-Israeli, to critical, to open hostility towards Israel.

backgrounds: among the Arab States there was no evidence of genuine Social Democratic sentiment to be found.<sup>17</sup>

The approach of the CDU/CSU to the conflict in the Middle East was characterized by a pro-Israeli stance. In this case, however, there was much less consensus on this matter than in the SPD. The CDU/CSU followed a middle-of-the-road approach which was typified by a feeling of moral responsibility towards the Jews where reparation was concerned, reserve towards the idea of a Jewish State (stemming from the Christian background of the party), support for Israel in its role as the cornerstone of the West in the Middle East and political restraint for the purpose of promoting economic relations with the Arab States.

The FDP—not a people's party like the SPD and CDU—was the party which had shown the least tendency to align itself either with Israel or the Arab States.

As a junior partner in the governing coalitions, the FDP stood for continuity and predictability in German foreign policy. It propagated political balance and supported efforts to reduce tension in this region. However, the FDP automatically followed the pro-Israeli Middle East policies of each of its senior partners in the respective governing coalitions (1969-1982 with the SPD and since 1982 with the CDU/CSU).

Since the signing of the Gaza-Jericho Unified Agreement on 13 September 1993, the political establishment in Germany has subscribed to the comfortable illusion that this Agreement will bring peace to Israel and Palestine. However, it would be more than naïve to assume that the signing of this Agreement can banish all of the centuries of injustice, the pain and suffering inflicted on both sides, the deep-seated hatred in the subconscious of the population, the reciprocal defamation of character

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<sup>17</sup> In 1992, the SPD faction of the Lower House expressly gave support to the concept of a Palestinian State in its social democratic statement on Near East and Middle East policy. SPD—Bundestagsfraktion (1992), p. 6.

through name-calling and caricature, such as Zionists and imperialists on one side and terrorists and murderers on the other.<sup>18</sup>

### **V. THE MIDDLE EAST POLICY OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY: AN EVALUATION**

In the past the Federal Republic of Germany has had little freedom of choice in its dealings with the conflict in the Middle East.

The pro-Israeli leanings of the German political establishment set the stage for its Middle East policy. The following were important in the development of this political stance: Historical factors (SPD), Christian/security factors (CDU/CSU), and/or continuity (FDP) were of importance where internal politics was concerned. Further, Germany's compliance with and/or subordination to the goals of the Middle East policy of the Western powers of the USA and NATO were a by-product of Germany's most important foreign policy goal since 1949, its own integration in the West. Germany's bafflement and helplessness in the face of pressure and criticism from Israel were based on a presumed lack of effort on the part of Germany to "overcome its past" and German economic interest in the Arab States. All of the above have influenced Germany's freedom of choice in the Middle East conflict.

However, the Middle East policy of the FRG has other sides to it which are important to our evaluation.

The relations of the FRG to the Arab States were always soundly anchored in economic interests. German produce has always had a reputation (of almost legendary proportions) for good quality in these countries. As a result the quality of economic relations has remained practically untouched by political instability elsewhere. The trade of the FRG with the Arab countries (the 1991 figure was approximately DM 25.5 billion) plays only a secondary role in the total volume of trade of

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<sup>18</sup> Ludwig Watzal, "Die Menschenrechtspraxis im israelisch-palästinensischen Verhältnis", in *Orient*, 34. Jahrgang, vol. 4, 1993, p. 635.

the FRG (the 1991 figure was approximately DM 648.2 billion) in terms of numbers.<sup>19</sup> However, at times the Arab countries ranked third on the list of Germany's trading partners after those of the EC and other industrialized countries.<sup>20</sup>

In addition, in the field of development cooperation with the FRG, the Arab countries have a fairly good standing based on the size of their populations when compared with other third-world countries. Between 1950 and 1992, 5 Arab States were ranked among the first 30 on the list of most important recipients of German development aid (official development assistance [ODA]—net expenditures): Egypt was in third place (DM 6.2 billion) after India (DM 8.1 billion) and Israel (DM 7.3 billion). Morocco and Sudan tied for twelfth place (DM 2.0 billion), while Tunisia ranked sixteenth (DM 1.6 billion) and Jordan ranked eighteenth (DM 1.5 billion).<sup>21</sup>

Finally, at the cultural level, cooperation has led to a situation where the two sides are at least not completely alienated from one another. The contribution in this area of the GDR to German-Arabic relations is worth mentioning. Among other things, exchange and "open door" programmes as well as numerous efforts to translate Arabic texts into German have contributed to the positive balance in German-Arab cultural relations.<sup>22</sup>

### **VI. THE MIDDLE EAST POLICY OF THE FRG: FUTURE PERSPECTIVES**

There was never a historically deep-seated relationship between Germany and the Arab world. Nevertheless, from the Arab point of view

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<sup>19</sup> *Nahost, Jahrbuch 1991*, p. 17.

<sup>20</sup> "Freundschaft und Frustration", p. 225.

<sup>21</sup> BMZ (1993), p. 76.

<sup>22</sup> "Freundschaft und Frustration", p. 227.

there are two factors which form the basis for closer cooperation: On the one hand, the position of Germany within the past 100 years stands in sharp contrast to that of the colonial powers of Great Britain and France.<sup>23</sup> Germany itself has never shown any ambition as a colonial power in the Arab world. In addition, the Arabs hold Germany in esteem historically speaking as a model and friend. Germany has successfully completed its destiny, the search for national unity, twice: in 1871 under Bismarck and in 1990 under Kohl. In the future the desire for an "Arab 1871" will be joined by the challenge of creating an "Arab 1990". In Germany as well, there is an increasing awareness of the challenge to Germany (and Europe) which can come from the Middle East. This challenge will presumably be just as great as that from the economically underdeveloped and politically unstable Eastern Europe.

The Arabs have great expectations of reunified Germany. It has a strong economy and lies in the heart of Europe. From the Arab point of view, Germany is the European power which could and should use its influence in the European Union to actively support a policy which would bring about a just settlement in the Arab-Israeli conflict. However, the FRG can meet these expectations only if it develops a new concept of its role in the Middle East. In the past, the Middle East policy of the FRG was morally and politically caught up in the unresolved relationship to its own past and the State of Israel. The way out of this blind alley can be found in the words of the President of the Republic, Richard von Weizsäcker: "Both guilt and innocence are personal. There is no such thing as the guilt or innocence of an entire population. However, each and every German must carry the burden of the history of his people—a legacy of history in its entirety with its light and dark chapters. He has no choice. He cannot blot out or ignore the dark sides of history."<sup>24</sup>

These words imply the twofold responsibility of the FRG where the situation in the Middle East is concerned. The historical responsibility

towards the Jewish people requires giving definite support to the existence of Israel within secure and internationally recognized borders. This involves the peaceful coexistence of Israel with its Arab neighbours, which in turn can only be achieved when the internationally recognized demands of the Palestinians and Arabs have been met and enforced. Therefore, a new German Middle East policy must also make allowances for a second responsibility: the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination must be realized. This people has been forced to bear the brunt of the burden of the aftermath of the European Holocaust in the Middle East. The Palestinians also have the right to their own State, a goal which can be obtained by peaceful means. The credibility of the FRG within the international community as a country which stands for democracy, and which respects the political and socio-economic rights of its citizens as well as the peaceful and just solution of conflicts, is at risk if a double standard is used. One standard of principles must be used when dealing with Israel or any other country in the region.

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<sup>23</sup> Peter Hünseler, *op.cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>24</sup> Richard von Weizsäcker, *Das Parlament*, Nummer 33, 9. August 1991, p. 4.

## GCC-EUROPEAN RELATIONS

*Yousef Al-Hassan*

Arab-European relations, particularly GCC-European relations, are old and intermingled within civilizational, political and commercial frameworks. In the past, they oscillated from periods of cooperation to periods of competition and conflict. The notion of dialogue appeared during the early 1970s as a sequel to two events: the first one was the October war of 1973, while the second was the resolution of the Arab ministers of oil, during that same month, to ban oil exports to the United States and the Netherlands, and to decrease production.

Perceiving the necessity of beginning a dialogue with the Arabs, Western Europe issued the Brussels Declaration on 6 November 1973, in which they invited the Arab countries to participate in a dialogue. The sixth Arab Summit held in Algeria in November 1973 reacted favourably to this invitation and soon talks involving Arabs and Europeans were under way. Of course other factors helped fully develop the idea of dialogue, among them geographical location (since they are connected by the Mediterranean), and economic and cultural factors.

During the different stages of the talks, which have continued—sometimes advancing, sometimes faltering—until the present time, the Arabs have been concerned with the political aspect, whereas the Europeans have been interested in economic and technical issues. During the periods characterized by weakness amongst the Arabs, the talks went through phases of conspicuous stagnation, to which the events occurring

in a number of European countries contributed. Nevertheless, a strict minimum went on and the outcome of the Arab-European talks was modest owing to various factors both Arab and European, among which were the irregularity of joint Arab action and the malfunctioning machinery of the Arab League, the counterpart of the European Commission. On the other hand, a collective European resolution is always subject to a lowest common denominator that can be mutually agreed upon, as a result of disagreements among the European countries. The European countries take time to formulate their attitudes, and besides this, certain regional and international superpowers not only lacked enthusiasm for this dialogue but were in fact greatly annoyed by it.

While the collective European positions during the talks were restricted to statements and exploratory missions to the Middle East, the European Community sought to develop its relations with certain Arab powers, such as the countries of the Arab Maghreb. Later, during the 1980s, the European Community sought as well to develop its bilateral relations with Arab Gulf countries.

From the beginning of the 1950s until the 1980s European policies towards the Arabs were in general determined by:

- The evolution of the European collective entity
- The development of the European-American relations
- The state of Arab-Arab relations

The Arabs noticed that the European Community—as a result both of its inability to do so and its categorical lack of desire—failed to play a concrete and effective role in settling the Arab-Israeli conflict or in preventing the first and second Gulf wars from breaking out or bringing them to an end, even though the Arabs urgently requested that they do so. At the same time, the Arabs failed to mobilize the European support necessary both for Arab national and regional developmental plans.

Meanwhile, it was noticed that the European Community took effective action to defend their economic interests and succeeded in attracting oil capital in parallel with the continuation of the sale of European arms and technology, especially by the European powers France, Germany and Britain.

Unfortunately, the Arab countries failed to encourage the European Community to enter into a detailed collective commercial agreement with the Arab world along the lines of various collective agreements binding the European Community together with a large number of the developing countries such as the African countries as well as countries of the Pacific and the Caribbean oceans. The fact that a number of the Arab countries sought to establish bilateral relations with the European Community—in a separate attempt to reap greater bilateral benefits—weakened the Arab-European dialogue and increased the gaps among the various Arab economies.

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Transforming the dialogue into efficacious Arab-European cooperation based upon interdependence would require a new atmosphere suitable for the new international climate and based upon the dialogue of civilizations as opposed to the clash of civilizations in order to serve the interests of both the Arab and the European communities.

There is an urgent need for a new developmental project that would bind the two parties together. This suggestion might seem difficult to put into effect, as the Europeans' agenda is full of domestic, regional and international problems; the Arab state of affairs is characterized by tension and by social, political and economic crisis. Yet, it is unsound—even dangerous—to neglect the dossier of Arab-European relations or to put off considering it.

It is inadmissible for cooperation to remain limited to restricted trade agreements or to modest financial and technical aid. The relations should grow to become a major component of the contemporary

geo-strategy both of Western Europe and the Arabs. The United States has its project of free commercial exchange with Mexico and Canada in operation, while Japan has its own developmental project, namely the establishment of a Pacific entity. The region to the south of Europe, however, is still limited and traditional. What is needed is an unshakeable, evolved cooperation based on the principle of common interest, a renewable productive partnership and a cultural dialogue that takes account of the existence of the other party and does not simply deny it and set it aside.

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Arabia and the Gulf area were tied to Western Europe by historical relations which date back four centuries and which were dominated by strategic and commercial interests. The contemporary relations, on the other hand, reflect—in their historical and geographical harmony—the importance of the ties existing between North and South. However, despite the fact that GCC-European relations are nowadays based mainly on economic components and commercial exchange, the geographical proximity of the two regions ensures the existence of a deeply rooted historical and cultural background stemming from both the fact of being neighbours and the interaction between their respective civilizations.

Bilateral trade developed greatly between the GCC and the European Community, reaching a total of about \$34 billion in 1990, making the European Community the most important commercial partner of the GCC; the GCC is the European Community's fifth most important commercial partner.

Despite the fact that the European Community imports 20 percent of the exports of the GCC, the terms of trade consistently favour the European Community, causing their trade surplus with the GCC to reach more than \$2.5 billion in 1990. This requires greater effort to build up economic relations upon contractual and institutional bases that allow for more balanced common interests.

The two parties each recognized the importance of establishing close cooperation: the European Community recognized the strategic importance of the GCC area, and the GCC countries became convinced of the importance of establishing a better balance in their financial and commercial relations with the rest of the world and its different blocs.

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It can be said that the first extended official meeting involving the GCC and the EC was held in Bahrain in 1984 at the initiative of the GCC. It was followed by another meeting in Bahrain in March 1985, to discuss the possibility of reaching a comprehensive agreement on economic cooperation between the two parties. However, the start of official talks between the GCC and the EC was announced only following a meeting which was held on 14 October 1985 in Luxembourg, headed by the Kuwaiti foreign minister on the side of the GCC and by the Luxembourg foreign minister on the side of the EC. The meetings and talks were capped later by the establishment of a sectoral cooperation agreement signed in Luxembourg on 15 June 1988 which was related to the fields of energy, industrial and commercial investment, the transfer of technology and training. The agreement provided for the formation of a joint council whose responsibility was to establish the bases for cooperation and which was authorized to make resolutions. This agreement became effective in January 1990.

To implement the articles of the agreement, the Joint Council has held four rounds as of the present writing. The first was held in Muscat (17 March 1990), the second in Luxembourg (May 1991), the third in Kuwait (May 1992) and the fourth in Brussels (May 1993). It also held several meetings of the joint committees in the fields of energy, environment, industrial cooperation, investment, science and technology, and training.

One of the most important aims of this agreement was to activate development, diversify the commercial exchanges between the two parties, and surmount the difficulties of the procedures and obstacles hampering

the flow of each party's products into the other's market, with the possibility of further development in the fields of trade and investment. Despite the sluggish performance of the world economy in 1992/1993, commercial and economic cooperation between the two parties developed somewhat during this period.

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The GCC viewpoint put forward during the talks, the work of the committees and the meetings with the EC may be summed up as follows:

1. The GCC considers itself to be a continuation of the Mediterranean area and expects to be treated in a way that is commensurate with its position and the importance of its trade with the EC.
2. Despite their great financial wealth, the GCC economies remain those of developing countries, relying to a great extent on a sole source of income, namely oil. They are seeking to diversify their production and to minimize their reliance on oil. In the same way, they are trying to benefit from the value added tax on their natural resources. Thus, the GCC expects to be treated in accordance with the provisions of article four of GATT, which is related to the developmental aspect of the relationships between the industrialized and the developing countries.
3. More than 40 percent of world oil reserves and 20 percent of gas reserves are stored in the territories of the GCC countries. It is obvious that these countries are going to continue to rely on oil and gas for the near future, especially since world demand for oil is expected to increase over the middle term. For this reason, the GCC seeks the long-term stability of the oil market.
4. The GCC holds that the GSP (generalized system of preferences) is not sufficient for commercial exchange. It aspires to the creation of a system that includes mutual trade concessions. However, taking into consideration the differences in the level of development, the European party should not expect to receive equal concessions.

5. About 50 percent of GCC imports from the EC are not subject to customs duties and neither are most of the GCC countries' exports to the European markets. This proves the possibility of having free trade between the two areas.

6. The GCC seeks to conclude a trade agreement that would establish its trade relations with the EC on a contractual basis that would eliminate in the long run any bias against their exports whether in the form of duties, taxation or special restrictions on refined oil or chemical products as well as guaranteeing markets for their new products. The GCC fears that a unified EC would lead to the creation of restrictions and procedures hampering GCC exports.

7. The GCC looks forward to entering joint industrial projects with the EC that would ensure equal revenue for both parties. It looks forward to cooperating in the areas of transfer of appropriate technology, science and training.

8. The GCC countries have provided a good investment climate and have suggested agreements to protect, guarantee and encourage investment.

There is no doubt that the EC recognizes the strategic importance of the GCC area, but it has failed to provide privileged treatment in regard to entering the EC markets. The EC suggested another alternative instead: the first country would be treated with consideration since it is a progressive, developing-natured alternative that gives both parties an opportunity for the exchange of information and facilities, together with the respect of the provisions of the GATT agreement regarding the prevention of dumping, compensatory duties against government subsidies and preventive measures. The question of establishing a duty-free zone between the two parties remains part of their agenda for discussion during the stages to come.

The energy/carbon tax is one of the most important subjects of disagreement between the two parties. As a result, existing trade



negotiations have been affected as a result of it. This issue dates to September 1991 when the European Commission suggested imposing an energy/carbon tax and the EC adopted a European energy charter that was signed by several countries in December 1991.

Some of the EC countries see this tax as part of a comprehensive strategy aiming at stabilizing the level of carbon dioxide discharges for the year 2000 at the level of 1990, in order to confront the global problem of climatic changes and give importance to environmentally sustainable economic development.

The GCC, however, sees this taxation as detrimental to the developing countries' economies. There arose doubts regarding the effectiveness of the suggested tax in limiting discharges of carbon dioxide, especially since oil is already overburdened by a high rate of taxation in the countries belonging to the EC, and since more taxation would adversely affect the GCC economies and their programmes to expand production and could in turn affect trade relations between the two parties. The following points outline the viewpoint of the GCC:

- The GCC suggested the creation of a body to manage international trade in petrochemicals.
- The GCC holds that the suggested additional tax on oil serves no real environmental objective. It will only increase the bias against oil, in favour of other fuels that are greater pollutants and more hazardous.
- Not only has the taxation imposed on oil increased, but the coal subsidy has risen as well. The subsidy on coal in Germany in 1991 was estimated at \$152 per ton, while implicit carbon taxes reached \$212 per ton of carbon in Germany according to studies undertaken by OECD. The suggested taxation would add about \$80 more per ton.

- It is important to mention that for each dollar paid for oil by the European consumer in 1992, the exporting countries received 19 cents; the shippers, refiners and distributors together received 21 cents; and the governments of the oil-consuming countries 60 cents, in addition to corporate taxes on oil-related operations.
- The circulating proposal within the EC is that a tax of \$3 on each barrel of oil should begin in 1993. This amount is to be raised by \$1 each year to reach \$10 in the year 2000. This increase in the cost will affect the European economy itself. For this reason, the less developed European countries (like Spain, Portugal and Greece) oppose it, especially since their use of energy is higher than the average of the EC.
- It is expected that the scope of the opposition to this taxation will increase, especially since the conditions under which it is being proposed are not void of political and economic aspects. Some of the European countries' attitudes might change in accordance with political changes, and with economic and environmental programmes. The proposal to impose the energy/carbon tax might even be suspended, especially since the worries, opposition and fears of the GCC regarding the results of this taxation—which would decrease international demand for Gulf oil—have continued unabated, thus affecting the stability of the oil markets that the Arab Gulf countries have done their best to maintain.

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The Arab point of view is doubtful regarding the feasibility of the suggested carbon tax and holds that its evaluation, distribution and application at the place of consumption are erroneous. This point of view is based on an awareness that this tax will not secure the protection of the environment. It will primarily ensure huge increases in revenue for the governments of the European industrialized countries at the expense of the oil-producing countries and the stability of oil production and prices. The Arab point of view holds as well that this taxation will bring about an

## FOREIGN POLICY

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increase in the consumption of coal and wood, meaning greater destruction of the environment. It will depress the demand for oil, causing great losses for the oil-producing countries as well as difficult problems related to oil production and costs, in turn leading to serious difficulties in providing the consuming countries with their needs in the future.

Demand for OPEC oil for the year 2000 is estimated at about 35 million to 40 million barrels/day. The proposed tax would cause OPEC to decrease its production by 3 million barrels/day in 2005. This means the appearance of problems on a global scale, in addition to financial losses in the oil-producing countries' revenue amounting to \$75 million to \$200 million.

The political stability of the oil-producing countries would be thrown off balance as a consequence of the decrease in their revenues.

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It is inappropriate that cooperation between the GCC and Europe remain confined to trade. It should extend to the various fields of culture, which constitute an important framework for joint action. Each party is capable of exchanging social and cultural values which would lead to the creation and development of new ideas beneficial to both.

At the same time, trade should be more balanced and should comprise the transfer of technology and sophisticated expertise, the establishment of joint advanced industrial facilities, the creation of a renewable productive partnership that would help establish a technical and vocational structure in the Gulf area, especially in the field of modern advanced institutional culture which characterizes certain European institutions, namely those from Germany.

Cultural convergence and the dialogue between cultures help deepen the common interests. Without such dialogue, relations are shaken and clashes are unavoidable.

## PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

# 10

## AN ARAB VIEW

*Sa'ad Mahio*

The author proposes a different approach to the issue of peace in the Middle East: instead of analysing and studying the positions of Arab scholars and Arab political groups towards the extreme changes taking place in the region, we should try to foresee to what extent these groups are affected by these changes.

This different approach is not unjustified. It seems that the region is being reshaped completely on all fronts: economic, security, political and even cultural and ideological. This is a reality. Events are dragging scholars and thinkers behind, without their being able to catch their breath. It is the event that precedes ideology and dictates the terms of ideology. It is a "history" written every day—a new era in which everything today is completely different from its colleague of yesterday.

Is there any need to say yet again that the life of Arab societies will turn upside down, at least during the current transition era? Or is there any need to justify observations that what is happening in the Arab world is an aftershock of the "earthquake" that convulsed Eastern Europe after the fall of the Soviet empire?

The price of the end of the cold war era is now being paid, after being long overdue in the Arab world. Perhaps the price here is different from that of Eastern Europe; it is taking the form of a regional settlement,

paving the way for a New Regional Order, while in Eastern Europe, the price took the form of free-market economies and democratic structures.

There is nothing strange in this since the matter is a question of strategic priorities. However, these priorities do not clash or contradict each other. Peace between the Arabs and Israel is the first necessary step to the process of integrating the Arabs into the Western security and economic structure. There is no doubt that political and cultural integration will not be far behind economic and security integration, but in certain cases political and economic integration will occur together, as we will see later; all the signs of this imposed integration are now appearing on the horizon.

What we should do at this point is to leave aside all the philosophical and theoretical battles that are going on in the different circles of Western thought, starting with the "end of history" theory, to the "Islam is the enemy" theory or the "clash of civilizations" theory which Samuel Huntington brought up recently. All these theories are suffering from a crisis of separation from the strategies and policies that are actually being applied.

It is true that the "political West" is concerned with the growth of the Muslim fundamentalist phenomenon, especially when the "cultural West" is feeding these concerns with all the weapons of the history of struggle between Islam and Christianity. But what is also true is that the West is not about to declare war on the Islamic worlds. It is acutely aware that this world is not a united force or an emerging empire; on the contrary, it is a defeated and broken front, stretching from Bosnia to Palestine to Somalia. And the West knows that the convulsions of the region are not directed outward as in the days of independence and national liberation, but inward, because of the problematic development of the question of modernity.

The West can coexist with "political Islam" as long as the latter does not pursue foreign policy approaches that contradict the interest and the foreign policy of the West, even if that means a kind of resistance to

the process of cultural integration. The current realities support this idea; the West is allied with a number of Arab and Muslim States raising the banner of Islamic ideology, and American strategic studies continuously distinguish among the various Islamic movements to determine whether these movements are acceptable or must be confronted and contained.

### WHAT INTEGRATION?

The natural process of 'imposed' integration, if it starts, will face some obstacles, but certainly these obstacles are not the ones that were predicted in the theories related to an Islamic enemy or to the clash of civilizations. We will try to touch upon some of the features of this process.

At the economic level, plans for furthering the integration of the Middle East economy into the world economy have already started at a rapid pace. These plans take many forms: direct assistance to the Palestinian entity; international conferences to organize the investments and quotas in the Middle East (one conference estimated that start-up investments would amount to between \$70 billion and \$100 billion); the pressures exerted by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to accelerate the transformation to a free-market economy in some Arab countries; the call to create "new security understandings" between the oil-producing countries and oil companies, etc.

As we notice here, the question is not related only to the future of the Israeli economy in peacetime; rather, it seems that the Israeli factor is only one part of a much wider process. For example, American pressure to end the Arab boycott not only serves Israeli interests but also those of hundreds of American companies affected by this boycott, as mentioned by Edward Djerjian, the Assistant Secretary of State.

Naturally, there is no "unified West" on this issue. There is common agreement on integration, but disagreement still exists on quotas. The European stance towards the investments and money of Iraq and Iran

(both of which are besieged by America) is an example of this disagreement.

Will this disagreement remain outside the political level? This is a question for the future.

### WHAT NEW ÉLITES?

If we agree on the common issues of economic integration, a new question arises: what are the Arab social and economic structures which will receive and adopt the process of restructuring? Here we will find that thoughtful reflection rather than analysis supported by data is the only tool in our search for answers. The first observation of such reflection is that there is a need for new socio-political élites who would occupy certain economic positions and who would be more suitable for the nature of the current stage of the process. Economic technocrats are very much in demand, but it is not completely ruled out that some private-sector men could hold power. Rafiq al-Hariri, the Prime Minister of Lebanon, is an example which could become common in the Arab world.

The reasons for this prominence are numerous: these élites, since their interests are economic, will be committed to the West and its interests and will be committed to a reasonable pace of modernization, and will put economic interests above ideological considerations whether in dealing with Israel or the West.

It is evident that the existence of these élites, along with the accompanying new laws and legal procedures, will be one of the basic conditions to attract investors to the Middle East.

If we take into consideration the categories of the probable new division of labour in the Middle East economic market (where, for example, Lebanon would specialize in trade and transportation, Egypt in industry, Syria in agriculture and textiles, and the Gulf States in trade other than oil), then the "Arab comprador" would be the main candidate for power.

What would be the political framework within which these élites would move? The Egyptian researcher Al-Sayed Yasseen was on target when he noted that any regime which does not achieve economic success will fall. From now on, success will be connected to the achievement of stability and political security, as well as to the "economic ideology" that conforms to the division of labour.

It is evident as well that these aims will lead to a partitioning and division that will be drawn along the lines of political movements, including the Islamic movements. These changes are not necessarily at loggerheads with the development of democracy, especially with the rise of radical fundamental movements in some countries. It is certain, however, that the "code of behaviour" will descend to the lowest limits, with respect to human rights, the independence of judicial authority and the rule of law. These are the requirements for starting a free-market economy and introducing investment guarantees. Besides, these factors will help to reduce the embarrassment of the West in dealing with "undemocratic allies."

### SECURITY AND IDENTITY

At a glance, the link between security and identity may seem strange, but the developments of the second war in the Gulf led to this linkage. Even long before the start of the peace process with Israel, the Arab States (entities and peoples), started to perceive their identity (or what they considered to be their identity) according to a redefining of the concept of the sources of danger.

After achieving peace, this force may become far more active, leading to thus far unimaginable axes and alliances. Israel may form one part in many of these alliances. But in the new axes, the United States will play the role of coordinator and guarantor of the States and of their relations within the region, if the efforts to build a unified regional security fail. (This is what has been happening in the Gulf so far.) Here, it should be mentioned that suggestions are being made in the West to

integrate the southern arch (i.e. the Middle East) into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

### FACTORS OF DISSENT

Will there be any resistance to this process of reformulation? Certainly, and this resistance may likely be based on the following:

- **The rejection of the economically stricken social classes of these new arrangements, and their adoption of some new Islamic or nationalistic or pan-Arab banner.** These classes will grow and expand if "wild capitalism", i.e. the form of capitalism which is being tried now in Russia, is applied. These classes include the agricultural sectors, which will lose their competitive ability, and also the semi-skilled middle classes, as well as the poor classes which may not benefit from the new division of labour. This will lead to new social division, with new political movements certainly being launched. This whole matter depends on the nature of the economic and development activity the new élites will practice. The success of the Israeli-Palestinian agreement depends completely on economic success. The same applies to agreements reached with the other Arab States of the Near East.
- **The Islamist nationalist élites**, which will try to mobilize all their ideological arsenal. These will have to speak in a muted voice at the beginning, but they may flourish with the possibilities of failure in regional development and with the growth of Israeli control of the keys to technological and scientific development. The Islamic movements, especially those which are not ready to coexist with the new arrangements, will constitute the spearhead of resistance, but will also be the most threatened; they will be hunted and harassed and find the carpet being pulled from beneath their feet. We cannot foresee how these movements can hold out

for very long before decaying, especially since they are based on the disappointment of the poorer classes and since they have practically no roots in the educated and middle classes.

- **Popular resistance** will not form a political current, but a latent force. Any economic deterioration will increase its efforts to solve its social and political crises as well as its identity crisis and will make it possible to form a resistance organization based on a historical, cultural heritage and a social collective memory.
- **Liberals** will refuse the division of labour in the region, which will deprive the Arabs of development opportunities both in the economic and political fields. Educated masses are not one unit, but rather a group of individuals who lack experience and local cultural background. Their resistance as well will stay within the framework of the State, because they fear the Islamic totalitarian movement would paralyze their ability to launch a complete liberal proposal.
- **Tension** will emerge as a result of the friction with Israel, who is considered the victor in the 50-year-old conflict. This tension is based on simultaneous identification with and hatred of the victor.

### CONCLUSIONS

1. The region is going through a painful transition period, and nothing will be as it was before.
2. The painfulness of the complete integration of the eastern Arab region in the new sorting out of the International Economic Order will be greater to the Arabs than to the Israelis. The benefits and gifts that Israel will receive will surpass the pains of peace. On the Arab side, a social division will occur between the classes which will benefit from peace and

will support it and the classes that will be harmed by peace and will oppose it.

3. New Arab political classes may emerge to suit the nature of the period; the common feature of such classes will be compradorian.
4. At the strategic security level, dual alliances will be formed between Israel and some Arab States and between the United States and most of the Middle East States, either on a bilateral basis or collectively.
5. Regarding identity, the new threat will be the self-delusions about "sub-identities" which are turning their back on Arabism until further notice.
6. Resistance will exist and may take violent forms, but it will be countered by opposing violence, which may be more violent. The balance of power and the size of Western interests tilts completely against the resisting elements.
7. The new tension which will slowly develop will centre between the lines of new élites who will be allied with the injured social classes that refuse to make the Arabs a commodity for consumption. This will spawn a revival which will be democratic, modern, and traditional at the same time and which will confront the problems of the period, especially with the uncovering of the backwardness of Arab societies in contrast to Israeli society. What we are witnessing is the second great shock after the shock of defeat in the Arab-Israeli war of 1948. This time the shock will affect Arab societies themselves and not some government apparatus or certain educated segments with all that this implies in terms of civil, cultural and political tension.
8. Symbols and representatives of this tension will be born together with the emergence of new governing classes, but it is still too early to foresee the future. An attempt to do so would only muddle the picture.

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This is not the end of history in the region, but is actually the beginning of a new history. The search at the present time for Arab "great ideas" may be useless and self-defeating. Such ideas will not spring forth during the current transitional period. The Arabs will not find their footing for the contemporary age before they emerge from the complete disorder and painful birth of the current period, and also from the defensive trench in which they are now sitting.

Great ideas will be born only after the great crises reach their climax. When Arabs start wondering again—and this will certainly happen—about their role in history and civilization, and about the meaning of their existence, and to whom leadership belongs, only then will they lay the foundation for constructing a new approach to history.

**SUSTAINING THE MIDDLE EAST  
PEACE PROCESS THROUGH  
COOPERATION:  
A EUROPEAN VIEW\***

*Eberhard Rhein*

In order to sustain peace in the Middle East, the parties of the region must engage in meaningful cooperation, in particular in the economic field. Such cooperation is, in the first instance, an objective in itself, in order to replace the existing sentiments of distrust with mutual confidence. It is also a necessary means to enhance the division of labour and to raise the volume of trade among the parties of the region and thereby raise the standard of living and eliminate one major source of social and political instability.

The EC must stand ready to underpin the process of regional cooperation as it evolves. To that end, the EC should be ready to undertake four separate actions:

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\* This chapter is based on a speech made by Eberhard Rhein to the London conference on "New Perspectives for Peace in the Middle East" in October 1993.



- **Lend its political support to the regional cooperation and integration process.** This is basically an education job, with the EC spelling out its own message of cooperation, without, however, imposing its own recipes.
- **Intensify its own cooperation with each of the countries of the region.** This implies a willingness to negotiate a new generation of more far-reaching cooperation agreements. These should be progressively transformed into reciprocal free-trade agreements, of the type which the Community already has with Israel. This would have a double effect: (a) it would open up other economies in the region; and (b) more important, it would make it easier for Israel's neighbours to enter into a free-trade type of contractual relationship among themselves.
- **Provide financial support for regional cooperation,** in particular for the financing of regional infrastructure projects and of technical assistance to the parties in the region. Such cooperation would not require, for the time being, any additional financial resources. These are available within the present financial framework until the end of 1996.
- **Encourage the European business community** to become much more active in the region than in the past (i.e., to maintain a high-profile presence).

The present status of regional cooperation in the Middle East (excluding the GCC countries) has virtually no significance. There is no substantial trade among the countries of the region, with the exception of Israeli/Palestinian trade flows, a tiny amount of Israeli/Egyptian trade, and light trading between Lebanon and Syria. Altogether, intraregional trade represents less than 3 percent of the total worldwide trade of these countries.

There is undoubtedly much more scope for additional trade. The example of the GCC, and more recently Eastern Europe, demonstrates quite clearly that there is more potential.

There is practically no regional private investment, and there is hardly any significant private investment from Europe, with the exception of the oil sectors in Egypt and Syria. Scientific cooperation is, again, virtually nil, with the exception of some efforts between Israel and Egypt.

Prospects for cooperation look much better today than they did a year ago. There is an entirely new outlook on the region, in particular from the side of the business community. In that sense, the Arabat/Rabin handshake in Washington on 13 September 1993 was undoubtedly worth hundreds of millions of dollars in terms of future business and development in the region itself. This is particularly evident in Israeli/Palestinian relations. Israeli contractors are trying to set up joint ventures or similar deals with Palestinian businessmen in order to be able to benefit from the expected boom of public works contracts. Israeli industrialists are also trying to take (minority) stakes in Palestinian manufacturing companies in order to use them as a cheap source of components and semi-finished products.

Between Israel and Egypt, the long period of cautious, secretive deals in trade, services, science and development is over. Now that the obstacles have fallen, one should expect to see a much higher level of cooperation to be forthcoming, for example on the idea to interconnect the two separate electricity grids.

The same goes for Israel and Jordan. Jordan, together with Palestine, should be the main beneficiary of the new peaceful climate in the region:

- By building just some 20 kilometres of road and bridges across the Jordan Valley and negotiating appropriate transit

arrangements, Amman would become more than 1,000 kilometres closer to Europe than in the past.

- Royal Jordanian would be able to fly over Israeli airspace instead of making the long detours via Syria or around the Sinai peninsula.
- Neighbouring cities like Aqaba and Eilat will undoubtedly enter into interesting municipal collaboration in such fields as airport sharing, water supply and water treatment, port facilities and electricity.
- It is certainly in the joint interest of both the Jordanian and Israeli phosphate and potash industries to work together.
- Between Jordan and Palestine there should be, as with the other countries, an electrical interconnection.

Finally, Egypt, Palestine, Israel, Jordan and Syria should be interconnected by much better and faster road systems than is the case at present.

In summary, there is a flurry of new ideas and projects. Some of these are bound to remain dreams for some time but some, perhaps even many, will become reality in the next six to ten years.

The simplest commercial transactions are the most common forms of cooperation, which should cover as many areas as possible. If one wants to put order into the manifold areas of cooperation, it is probably best to distinguish among three main categories:

- Economic cooperation (infrastructure, agriculture, water, trade, labour);
- Security and political cooperation;

- Cultural and scientific cooperation.

It is important also to emphasize that cooperation is not a matter limited to governments or even the public sector. The main role of governments is to offer the necessary political umbrella and, where necessary and appropriate, the legal and institutional framework in which cooperation between private companies, NGOs, municipalities and research institutions can flourish. It is therefore not necessary, at least not in the initial phase, to set up complex institutional mechanisms or procedures. It might, however, be helpful and may even be necessary to give an initial impetus to the creation of a general cooperative climate through a general political message. Such a political message could be given in various forms. Foreign ministers of the region or even heads of government could meet and solemnly decide to lead their countries into a new era in which they would cooperate peacefully in as many fields as possible. In a way, this is what the Israelis and Palestinians have done in their recent accords.

However, it is not at all necessary or even always desirable to have cooperation embrace all the parties of the region. One should, on the contrary, encourage as much as is possible in an *à la carte* approach. We are all familiar with this dichotomy through our European experience.

In a paper on the subject, the EC Commission limited itself to one main area of cooperation, i.e. economics. It has spelled out what may be called its "vision" for future economic cooperation in the region and has done so without any desire to impose its own views on the region, but rather to provoke thinking and a lively debate within the region itself on the future possibilities for cooperation. Indeed, it is not up to Europeans to tell the Syrians, Israelis and Egyptians how they should define cooperation between themselves. We can contribute by planting the seed of the basic idea and sharing with the region our good and bad experiences. The main areas of economic cooperation have been touched upon in the Commission paper.

### TRADE

A greater volume of trade between the countries of the region would certainly be the most effective means of linking them together and of bringing together a great number of people. If the region wants to intensify trade, at least three main issues have to be addressed:

- **The facilitating of border crossings.** The various countries of the region, because of security concerns and the lack of trade and passenger traffic, have no experience in handling large numbers of vehicles and people crossing their respective borders. Long waiting times and red tape, perhaps, constitute the single most serious impediment to higher volumes of trade. Europe has a long experience in this field and should share it with the countries of the region.
- **Allowing for the transit of goods and people within the region.** In Europe we take it for granted that Switzerland can use French, German or Italian roads and ports and that we can overfly each other's airspace. In the Middle East region, however, all this has to be set out, and it is a matter of priority if trade flows are to be encouraged.
- **Reducing the excessive level of protection which prevails in most of the countries of the region.** Compared to Europe, the levels of protection (duties and non-tariff barriers) appear to be absolutely anachronistic, reminiscent of Europe in the 1930s or early 1950s.

Only Israel and Palestine maintain a free-trade relationship. Even if this was imposed on the Palestinians as a consequence of the occupation, it seems to be in the interest of both parties to maintain the régime and to include agricultural products as well, which would give the Palestinians a better chance of balancing their trade with Israel.

Ideally, the countries of the region should embrace the idea of industrial free trade to be established progressively from now until early in the next century. Indeed, no Middle Eastern country by itself, not even Israel or Egypt, is sufficiently large to allow for modern industries to be developed. Considering the advanced stage of industrial development in Israel, it would be normal that such a free-trade agreement would follow an asymmetrical pattern, comparable to the one which the EC recently negotiated with the countries of Eastern Europe.

### TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Trade is not going to flourish in the region without a more efficient and rapid road system. The Community can help in this field by financing a general transport study (which it has done), and through specific engineering studies for particular road links, as well as through co-financing the construction of particular stretches of road.

### ENERGY AND ELECTRICAL INTERCONNECTION

Except for Israel and Palestine, none of the electricity grids of the region's countries are interconnected. Such interconnection would lead to major savings in investments and consequently in energy production costs. At the same time, it would increase the interdependence between countries. The Community is financing a preliminary study on the benefits and technical modalities of such interconnection. In the medium term, joint facilities for electricity generation (e.g. the Dead Sea project) should be considered.

### LABOUR

Labour migration plays an important role in balancing supply and demand for labour in the region. In particular, it appears important to maintain the status quo regarding Palestinian labour in Israel and Egyptian labour in Jordan, but it seems equally important to improve the legal status of expatriate workers throughout the region.

**SERVICES AND TOURISM**

It does not appear urgent to provide for the free movement of services across frontiers, except in the field of tourism, which is one of the main economic assets of all the countries of the region. In the past, those assets were not fully exploited due to political insecurity, terrorism and continued fear of conflict. The prospect of peace presents an entirely new horizon. Regional tours through several countries, to visit historical monuments and enjoy natural beauty, become possible, but only if the crossing of frontiers becomes a speedy and routine affair.

**WATER**

Cooperation in this field is vital, of course, but is also extremely complex and highly political. Areas for cooperation are obvious and include water sharing, joint management of resources, harmonization of prices, development of water-saving technologies and of alternative water resources like desalination.

**WHAT ARE THE PROSPECTS FOR THE NEAR  
AND MEDIUM FUTURE?**

It was hoped that during 1994 the international community, and the EC in particular, would be in a position to proceed with the financing of specific regional projects, at least with the launching of feasibility studies and technical cooperation. The main fields for such concrete action appear to be electricity, road transport, environment, water, agriculture and networks.

If and when the Community enters into free trade or progressive free trade with all of the major countries of the region, this would in turn facilitate the conclusion of similar agreements among the countries of the region themselves.

In conclusion, prospects for the Middle East have never looked brighter than at the end of 1993. Let us hope that all those in charge, be they in government, in research or in business, seize upon these new opportunities and thereby make happen what we all wish, namely, peace, more stability and more prosperity for the Middle East.

**THE DIALOGUE  
BETWEEN  
ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY**

## AN ARAB ISLAMIC VIEW (PALESTINE)

*Ahmed Sudqi Dajani*

### THE APPEARANCE OF THE IDEA OF ISLAMIC-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE IN OUR ERA AND HOW IT PROCEEDED

In modern times, the idea of Islamic-Christian dialogue emerged in the period immediately after the Second World War. During this period, there was interplay between the technological revolution (science) and the various liberation movements (politics). Western civilization quickly became entangled in a cold war between the Western countries following a capitalist "liberal" line and the Eastern European countries following a Marxist line, giving rise to the terms *the West* and *the East*. Political thinking in the capitalist West, which was led by the United States, aimed at direct Islamic-Christian dialogue to discuss world problems facing Christians and Muslims together, including Western countries and those countries of the Muslim world that had gained their independence, in order to contain the spread of Marxist/communist ideology, whose materialism aimed at "the demolition of belief in spiritual values," as Bayard Dodge, former president of the American University in Beirut, expressed it in his presentation to a conference on Islamic culture and its relations in the contemporary world of the early 1950s (held at Princeton University) and which included the topic of Islamic-Christian dialogue.

## THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

### TWO PERIODS

We can distinguish between two time periods—one before and the other after 1973, which witnessed the October war—in terms of the climate that surrounded the Islamic-Christian dialogue. This is also the case with other dialogues taking place on economic, social, cultural or political matters in the Western and Islamic worlds.

The initiative for such dialogue came in most cases from the Christian West, which defined the framework in which it was conducted in the light of specific goals and objectives that it had in mind. In Islamic-Christian dialogue, a distinction can be made between encounters of a political and those of an intellectual nature.

### THE CLIMATE SURROUNDING THE DIALOGUE

On the Islamic side, enthusiasm for the dialogue waned in the pre-1973 period owing to the West's support for the establishment of Israel. The Islamic side had serious doubts about the objectives of the Christian side regarding the meetings and encounters of a political nature which were aimed at confronting the Soviet Union and communism. The door to this type of dialogue closed after the West's proposal that various alliances be formed, among them al-Hilf al-Islami (the Islamic alliance). In the 1960s, liberation movements were in full swing and the Vatican was preparing a document on the exoneration of the Jews at the same time that Israeli aggression against Arab States was escalating, raising doubts on the Islamic side about Catholicism in addition to the doubts it already had concerning Protestantism. If not for the Israeli aggression, this Catholic stance with regard to the Jews would perhaps—for reasons related to the Islamic faith—have gained the support of the Islamic side.

The intellectual dialogue of the period was able, with great difficulty, to open a narrow path in a climate overcast with dark clouds. However, the atmosphere became completely inconducive to dialogue after the setback of June 1967, which involved the military defeat of

## *An Arab Islamic view (Palestine)*

several Arab countries and the Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem and of territory belonging to several Arab countries.

After the October war of 1973, the climate for dialogue improved on the Islamic side. The limited victory of the Arab States had a powerful psychological effect in boosting morale, which encouraged dialogue and which promoted the idea of dialogue in general; various Islamic-Christian dialogues and related activities got under way. The various parts of the Islamic world witnessed events that reinforced the perceived importance of Islamic-Christian dialogue and of what was known as "the Islamic awakening," thus increasing the readiness of the Islamic side to engage in dialogue.

### OBSERVATIONS MADE IN REVIEWING THE COURSE OF THE DIALOGUE

When we look at the totality of the dialogue activities of this period, we notice that the initiative continued in most cases to originate with the Christian West, whether Protestant or Catholic. However, the response of the Islamic side was stronger than it had been prior to 1973, and it arrived at the point where it also took the initiative.

The Arab branch of the Eastern Orthodox Church began to take part in some encounters, but the Russian branch was prevented by the Soviet Union from participating. The Orthodox Arabs were eager in every meeting they shared in, to highlight their association with the Arab Islamic civilization, in whose establishment and prosperity they had taken part.

The subjects of the Islamic-Christian dialogue multiplied, covering the following areas: how religion could be an ideology of life; the common foundations of the beliefs of the two religions; social justice as a fruit of faith in God; and how to overcome the preconceptions and misunderstanding which separated the followers of the two religions.

## THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

Topics also included youth, women, the family, education, the environment, coexistence, diversity, work ethics and similar subjects.

The number of meetings increased, as did the parties on both sides who were organizing such encounters. Specializations began to appear among the organizers, and the need became apparent for coordination among the various activities being held.

These meetings resulted in the positive interaction of those participating in them and created a climate of tolerance which was reinforced by the conviction that the dialogue must continue, and must move to a new phase.

Finally, this period witnessed activity in interfaith dialogue and saw an emerging concern of the Jewish religious establishment to be included in activities for adherents to the three revealed religions, within a framework of Judeo-Christian-Muslim dialogue. On the Islamic-Christian side, this push was received with strong reservations, due to the escalation of Israeli Zionist aggression.

### FACTORS AFFECTING THE DIALOGUE

Through the review we have been making, we can identify the positive and negative factors affecting the Islamic-Christian dialogue in the Muslim world and in the West.

- The existence of a certain amount of relaxation between the two sides of the dialogue was a positive factor, imparting a sense of trust and stimulating each side to become truly acquainted with the other to reach a point of real cooperation between them.

- The attempt to turn the dialogue into a direct political discussion of issues whereby one of the parties tried to draw the other over to its position was a negative factor, undermining confidence and creating an atmosphere of doubt.

## *An Arab Islamic view (Palestine)*

- Another negative factor, and one which sullied the atmosphere for dialogue was the aggressive Israeli policy towards the Arabs and the Muslims on the subjects of Jerusalem, the occupied territories, the return of Palestinians and the treatment of the Palestinians in their homeland since 1948, and the tacit and open support that this policy received from the West.

- Emphasizing the spiritual dimension and establishing high values draws attention to and engenders discussion on subjects concerned with humanity as a whole and with the quest to establish common ground. This is a positive factor and helps establish a climate in which the dialogue can move forward.

- The choice of vital topics is a beginning, and giving these topics the attention they deserve would make it possible to achieve specific goals, which is a positive factor making the dialogue more palatable and generating greater enthusiasm for it.

### THE NEED FOR ISLAMIC-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE TODAY

There is general recognition of the challenges that face humanity and our world on the eve of the twenty-first century, as well as widespread conviction that humankind needs to cooperate in responding to these challenges with effective action, with all taking part, and that dialogue is the way to arrive at such cooperation and expand the circle of believers who see for religion a positive, distinctive role in spreading a culture of high-minded values and in spreading, as well, concern for dialogue between religions, particularly Islamic-Christian dialogue, to face the enormous dangers stemming from tyranny and oppression.

- There is a risk of man's tyrannizing his environment and ecosystem, due to the technological revolution, which has arrived at limits previously unknown to humanity.



## THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

- There is a danger of man's tyrannizing his brother man by many different forms of racism, as the traffic in armaments intensifies.
- There is danger of mankind's giving way to lusts and base appetites, due to the drug traffic and the isolation of individuals in a high-tech industrial society.
- The risk of the annihilation of life due to nonconventional weapons puts mankind in a position where he must opt for peace.
- The danger of overbearing insolence among the rich countries puts squarely before mankind the necessity of choosing justice and well-being for everyone.
- The danger of "media control" in holding self-image hostage and in excluding the "other" from consideration puts before mankind the necessity of choosing to become mutually acquainted and find the oneness in diversity in our world.

There is no doubt that the Islamic-Christian dialogue could gather the energies necessary to triumph over these risks and dangers, and should define the topics it chooses to address accordingly. However, the climate surrounding the dialogue makes it easy for the extremists who reject it to manipulate people's feelings against dialogue, as we see in the attempts of certain Westerners to organize anti-Islam campaigns, their aggression against Muslims and their support for Zionist settlement-building in Palestine.

### THE ISLAMIC STARTING POINT FOR ISLAMIC-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

The Islamic faith provides a strong basis for dialogue with other religions and among individuals, on a variety of topics. Islam considers differences among people to be one of the ways in which God has arranged creation, happening in accordance with His will.

## An Arab Islamic view (Palestine)

Related to this is the principle of the right of choice: as the Qur'an states, there is to be no compulsion in religion. Islam establishes that God created mankind, male and female, and made them peoples and tribes, so that they could become mutually acquainted; He called upon them to cooperate, in piety and godliness. The Prophet of God, Mohammed Bin Abdullah (may God's blessings and peace be upon him), entered into a dialogue with the adherents of Christianity and Judaism. The Qur'an included the basis for coexistence and cooperation, and encouraged dialogue. From that time, the dialogue between the followers of these religions has continued within the sphere of Arab Islamic culture, at times slackening, at times reviving.

It is noteworthy here that in speaking about the Christians our ancestors used the term *Nasaara* as opposed to the word *Masihiyin*<sup>1</sup> in common use today. This is because the Qur'an refers to them as *Nasaara*. In Arabic *Nasaara* was the plural of *Nasraani*, which was derived from *nasara*, meaning to aid or give; also *Naasira* was the name of the village in Bilad al-Sham (Greater Syria) which we know as Nazareth in English and to which the word *Nasaara* is related. This noun includes the meaning of giving and aiding, and is in common use in Bilad al-Sham and the Arabian peninsula. Use of this term is preferable in Arabic within the dialogue taking place within our cultural circle.

This doctrinal basis of the dialogue is the best guide to what the intellectual dimension of the dialogue should be about, a dimension defined by the human intellect, and guided by inspiration.

### THE OBJECTIVES OF DIALOGUE FROM AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

The general objectives of the Islamic-Christian dialogue follow from faith in God and involve coming to common terms in confronting

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<sup>1</sup> Derived from the root *masaha*, to wipe or anoint, whence *al-Masih*, the Messiah (or the anointed), comes.—Trans.

tyranny and oppression and working righteousness. "Say: 'O People of the Book! Come to common terms as between us and you: that we worship none but God; that we associate no partners with Him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, lords and patrons other than God'. . ." (Qur'an, III:64).

- One high-priority objective is that of mutual acquaintance, which is achieved by acquiring knowledge of the other, as he really is, and correcting the mental image by eliminating all the preconceptions and misunderstanding that divide and separate the followers of the two religions. Under this objective, we can distinguish an indirect approach, i.e., meeting to discuss topics of interest to both sides, and a direct approach, i.e. directly discussing the preconceptions and misunderstanding.

- Another goal is cooperating for the sake of piety and godliness, by examining issues vital to the two sides to the dialogue, with the believers all the while striving together, each side with its own goal, towards all that is good. "The truth is from thy Lord, so be not at all in doubt. To each is a goal to which God turns him; then strive together (as in a race) towards all that is good. Wheresoever ye are, God will bring you together. For God hath power over all things" (Qur'an, II:147-148).

- The dialogue should leave alone the idea of unifying two or more religions. This means that the dialogue should not concern itself with issues of doctrine, but rather should be based on the respect of each side for the other side's doctrine and on acknowledgement of the principle of divergence and freedom of choice. As the Qur'an says "To you be your Way and to me mine" (CIX:6). God alone is the one to judge belief and works. "Those who believe (in the Qur'an), those who follow the Jewish (scriptures), and the Sabians, Christians, Magians and polytheists—God will judge between them on the Day of Judgement. For God is witness of all things" (Qur'an, XXII:17).

- A principal aim of the dialogue is that it bring out the truth of the issues and matters that are important to people and that it call attention to

high-minded principles and values to which laypersons and the authorities alike must be committed. This requires from each side of the dialogue that it keep in mind the fact that religion steers policy and not the other way around. People should be called to the path of God with wisdom and fine exhortation and preaching, demanding of those in our world today who are of the party of Qarun<sup>2</sup> what the believers asked of this wealthy individual: "But seek, with the (wealth) which God has bestowed on thee, the home of the Hereafter, nor forget thy portion in this world. But do thou good, as God has been good to thee, and seek not mischief in the land; for God loves not those who do mischief" (Qur'an, XXVIII:77). They should also keep in mind "that home of the Hereafter We shall give to those who intend not high-handedness or mischief on earth. And the End is (best) for the Righteous" (Qur'an, XXVIII:83).

### TOPICS OF THE DIALOGUE

There are many topics of mutual importance to the two sides of the Islamic-Christian dialogue, and it is advisable to categorize them. There are topics related to the doctrinal positions of the two sides on various issues, at the forefront of which are the issue of resisting racism and prejudice, the issue of social justice, the issue of freedom and responsibility and the issue of peace based on justice.

There are also topics related to man, the earth he inhabits and the ecosystem and environment that surround him. Other topics relate to human society and such issues as the family, marriage, chasteness, women's status in the family and in society and complementarity between women and men on the basis of full equality in humanity, as well as the issue of social integration in its various forms, and the issue of diversity in society.

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<sup>2</sup> Identified with Korah of the English Bible, Qarun was one of the Israelites who left Egypt with Moses and Aaron and who rebelled, believing that he and his followers were just as holy as the priests. God destroyed him and all those who rebelled with him. See Numbers 16:1-35.—Trans.

Yet other topics are concerned with man and authority, consultation (that is, the ruler's consultation of the ruled), democracy and political participation. Other topics involve work ethics, especially in the new fields opened up by the technology revolution. Some topics relate to reading the shared history from the perspective of history as an incentive and stimulus, as opposed to history as a burden. Such an approach involves positive images of coexistence and cooperation and eager anticipation of the common future.

### SHAPING THE DIALOGUE . . . WHO IS CONCERNED?

There is a pressing need to keep in mind the detailed map of each of the sides of the dialogue, to include the various schools of thought, sects, denominations and institutions, bearing in mind at the same time how these were previously formulated, so as to be confident about how to proceed in order to achieve the necessary coordination from each of the sides of the Islamic-Christian dialogue, so that the dialogue can be carried on and can succeed. A map like this makes the dialogue complete and makes it easy to specify exactly who the concerned parties are.

### LATER . . . THE NEW PHASE

The dark clouds that gathered over the dialogue during the early 1990s need to be swept away. The Islamic side is worried about the position of the Western Christian side on Jerusalem. It feels a great bitterness when it sees the Christian West consecrating the citadel of Zionist colonialism in Palestine, right in the heart of Arab Islamic civilization. And yet it sees the world ecstatic at the fall of another, bigger bastion of racism in the continent of Africa. What a sharp historical distinction is being made here. The Islamic side is also concerned about the anti-Islam campaign being waged by Western extremist Christians and racist Western Zionists; at the same time, it appreciates the stances taken by European Christian symbolic figures in confronting this campaign, such as the October 1993 speech on Islam by

Prince Charles of Great Britain. The Vatican's recognition of Israel at the end of 1993 filled many people on the Islamic side of the dialogue with bitterness and doubt. Likewise, the crimes of racist Serbs in Bosnia Hercegovina and the West's silence on this subject have stirred up strong anger. . . . In the light of this reality, there is an urgent need for the Western Christian side to show initiative in dispelling the clouds, by taking clear, fundamental stands that bring out the truth in order to establish the right climate for a prosperous dialogue. And the aim is toward God.

## AN ARAB CHRISTIAN VIEW (LEBANON)

*Bishop George Khodr*

Islam and Christianity have been in contact ever since the revelation of the Qur'an, a contact which has variously been characterized by mutual affection, confrontation or some state in between. The hope has always been present, however, that hearts would come together until the Day of Resurrection when God would reveal Himself in all His dazzling reality and controversy should cease between those who inhabit Paradise. Until time shall have an end, ideas will be compared with other ideas and the Islamic mind and the Christian mind will survive. For each of us to understand the other requires unrelenting effort; magnanimous understanding requires a magnanimous heart so that we may achieve an untroubled peace of mind.

Thus there has taken place discussion between those of pure mind. It became an objective to achieve peaceful coexistence between those of good heart who had neither political aspiration nor territorial ambitions. Those of pure intent are driven only by devotion to the Almighty. It is in this way that the dialogue of pure life has come about, as a basic condition for minds to meet unaffected by considerations of personal or group attachments.

In the beginning there was life—philosophy followed later; therefore I shall emphasize coexistence based on charity and a good heart as a preliminary stage in the dialogue. This will show us our common

ground, whereas history shows us what has divided us. We are the advocates of peace in a world torn apart, whose history is one of tragedy.

It is not that I deny the meeting of minds, but purity is the basic preliminary to such a meeting until God shall inspire us with a word of equality between us and judge between us with truth and justice. This is the atmosphere that would make dialogue credible. Such an atmosphere makes a distinction between an honourable, dignified and unconditional coexistence and a situation of interpretations and explanations which alternate, expand and contract. Such an atmosphere does not create space with freedom, since anyone who aims a blow at freedom does not give scope for responsible dialogue. There can be no discussion when there is self-imposed isolation or when the *shahada* (the declaration of faith) is declared to be sterile.

Freedom is part of spiritual perfection for you and for me. Anyone who is consumed by the lust of hatred will seek to kill others in this world and to cast them into the fire in the next. But in every nation those who are truly free and "who tremble with joy at the name of God" and whose souls are cleansed by a state of monastic devotion have shown that it is possible to have a coming together of people and that it is possible to raise up the towers of divine love so that speech may be made smooth when that which is interior is united with its counterpart. It is my innocence which makes me say to you "Your place in my heart is my whole heart." In such a situation dialogue between us is a process of osmosis.

This is something rare in history but it is a new spiritual effort to overcome the pain which each of us has suffered from the other. We must transform the pain into the speech of joy. The attempts being made are still embarrassed efforts because of the weight of our inheritance but "in love and charity there is no fear." Charity and affection are the depth of aspirations and represent the starting point for that calm which goes on to eliminate the fear to be found in isolation. You come, and in you are all past ages and the burden of certain memories. But if you look forward to brighter days, you, in the West, can repent of the Crusades and their

criminality, and you in the East, be you Christian or Muslim, can be liberated from the weight of the Crusades upon you and be freed from the grip of imperialism which was imposed upon you.

We in the Orient must break out of the complex of the Crusades episode, of which we were the joint target in the Levant, in Egypt and in Cyprus, and which did such harm to the Eastern Christians in Constantinople. Therefore, dialogue should begin from those who have coexisted in the Muslim countries day after day, especially as they are Arabs. From the very beginning Christians have had an organic connection with the Arab East. They were not established by some missionary activity from the West, and it was not in order to combat the Muslims that they stayed here. Rather, they sought to participate in life and they also suffered from the same foreign tyranny by the Franks and later by the Ottomans. Moreover, it was Arabs of the two great religions who mingled and worked together to build one national life and who shared the wish to enter into one civilization and culture. And here you can see them living happily together as good friends. It is tangibly evident that people are not created by written texts if they are at variance nor by history if it is one of arduous experience but are made by freshness of heart and a soul which finds peace in God.

In all this we have tried not to have any second-class citizens between us, and our dream of a national existence has been that there should be a land in which there was peace of mind and in which one group should not be in the debt of the other. One group may suffer from a complex of being in a minority group, while the other may be deformed by pride in its great numbers. As the New Testament says, "If a man should have pride, it should be pride in God." The members of the minority community should practise forgiveness and the majority community should be expansive enough to avoid inter-community disputes and the consequent spilling of innocent blood. He who pardons faults is glorious and strong and "love has no boundaries." It seeks no evil and does not come down as a charitable gift but rather as a divine right, as mercy and expiation.

If people (of different religions) can be assured of each other and if one Book (the Qur'an) can be reassured of the other (the Bible), then meanings may be derived in a scientific and historical methodology which would dominate by the end of this century. We can now come to the texts with perfect transparency and complete peace of mind. And just as of old al-Shahrastani, al-Ghazali and Ibn Arabi and the early Muslims in general approached the Gospel with understanding, so now the Christian will approach the Qur'an with understanding. As the Imam Ali said, understanding is our first responsibility. If the dams of ignorance collapse, we shall put an end to those historical pressures which souls suffer from, and minds will become enlightened so that they speak to one another, and then we should be able to see the spiritual beauty which lives in the other person and in his scriptures.

We should seek the injunctions to truth wherever they are to be found in a soul thirsting for righteousness, and we should testify to the sublimity which we savour everywhere. The reason for this is that anyone who is ascetic in all things in his desire to see the face of God seeks that face wheresoever it appears and follows wherever it proceeds.

This is "the union of testimony" of those who when they realize the lordship of God feel that they are resting in the same profoundness. He alone knows their unity even if they are not aware of it. This is because "In religion there is to be no compulsion" (Qur'an, II:256), in the context of the blessings of this togetherness, where no one is superior and no one is inferior and where the good human presence interacting with no restrictions is what considers all people to be as equal as the teeth of a comb, in one true community. In this way we shall be able to say "We" in all honesty because of this shared destiny in the family of those who believe in the one God and because of the shared spiritual values which God has inspired and on which the virtues of ethics and morals are based.

Within the context of the blessings of this mutual affection based on understanding there must be an abandonment of violence, because each of us is within the mandate of the other whether or not such a mandate is provided for in legal texts. In terms of contemporary humanity each

of us has an obligation to the other in reason and hope, and it is this humanity which totally rejects the idea of spilling blood including any manner or means of repression. Repression is not and never will be a means of guiding anyone to the right path. It is, rather, the most telling expression of fear and weakness of conviction in the message one bears. No religion threatens another; it is tyrannical behaviour alone that threatens "the oppressed on earth" and that brings about dishonesty and conspiracy. God carries conviction to mankind through Himself and through the purity of those who love Him. Purity makes the message live. I know of no repression or isolation without injustice.

One of the most destructive means of contemporary violence lies in the media, which attack the others and their message: this is simply a means of expressing anger. But anyone who in fact has great knowledge has great love and affection also. And he who loves is devoid of vices. To denigrate others and their religion and their holy things is not to deter anyone and neither is it a means of guiding them to the right path. Flexibility, forbearance and right preaching derive from the enlightenment of hearts purified by God.

In the context of the blessings of such a vision we become far removed from telling the other he is completely and most definitely mistaken. Anyone engaged in dialogue is presumed to be gaining something from his interlocutor. Dialogue is not simply a disguised means of propaganda, since anyone engaged in dialogue in letter and spirit leaves aside propagation of his faith, as such, while engaged in dialogue. If you are happy to have a dialogue, then you are content to have the other person question you, and you accept, for the sake of argument, the possibility that you may be mistaken in your presentation or interpretation or inference. You feel in advance that you are not in a confrontational situation with the partner in dialogue. The precondition for a partner in dialogue is to let the other party explain himself and to assume that the other knows his sources. The other party—within his intellectual system—has a consistent spiritual and mental world and is intimately acquainted with the historical thinking to which his religion belongs. He stands opposite to you in terms of what he has inherited but

he stands with you to the extent that both you and he clarify yourselves by talking to each other. You must enter into his spiritual world to the extent of tasting it but without being untrue to your own convictions and you must have an awareness of how he interacts with his scriptures and why he regards them as being divinely inspired.

This is an endeavour which is almost impossible because it requires a great deal of humility and a great deal of knowledge of the two religions. The most eloquent stimulus to dialogue is the Qur'anic verse "If God so wished he could have made you one nation." If the will of God exists for all eternity, does not this mean that we are in a state of duality which can never be destroyed by history whatever some people might wishfully call for? The second reason for dialogue is that the interpreters of religion are only human, as are the theologians, the exponents of scholastic theology and the scholars of Islamic jurisprudence. The question is: what is the proportion of the divine element, and what is the proportion of the human element, which is always subject to error? Dialogue arises from doubt as to a particular methodology, not from doubt about the foundation. Therefore dialogue has its origins in belief, but belief that is cleansed of all human defects. Your devotion to your Lord frees you from allegations of associating others with God, that is to say, from every kind of passion attributed to God but of which He is quite free.

If men of religion approach each other in life or thought and have a reasonable amount of purity of heart and higher knowledge, the meeting between them will be a means to purging the inner self and to deeper understanding of their respective religions. In all of this, there is no denial of what anyone views as basic and a sign of devotion to the belief held.

Our relationship to Islam is not one of viewing Islam as relative and containing error; my view of Christianity is not like this either. I understand that the believer will not accept any infringement of his religion or any going beyond its bounds. Each one of us resides in the final product of what he believes in and none of us accepts any addition

to his belief or any revised version of it. Therefore there is no scope for fabrication. Commingling or integration will not cancel genuineness. However, the historic heritage can be violated if one of us attributes to the other a difference when there actually is no difference.

In this lengthy joint phase it seems to me that the first intellectual endeavour for each of us is to seek clarifications from the other. Then comes debate if there is no escape from it, in an atmosphere marked by freedom and non-violence. We need 50 years of clarification. We must end the phase of levelling accusations. In encounters between us there is an increase in the understanding of ourselves by each one of us, and we learn in meeting each other to repent of the sins of our people. At the same time we do not press for the promotion of their attitudes where that is inappropriate or unacceptable.

After this lengthy and arduous process has been completed will come the turn of sincere academic thinking, and with that there will descend upon hearts a true vision.

## AN ARAB ISLAMIC VIEW (UAE)

*Ezzeddine Ibrahim*

The dialogue between Islam and Christianity is as old as the appearance of Islam. In fact, the Holy Qur'an is full of verses addressed to the adherents of Christianity, sometimes to emphasize the truths that are common to both religions, sometimes to indicate doctrinal points of divergence, and other times to invite people to agree upon certain issues. The Prophet (peace be upon him) carried on a dialogue with the clergymen and monks of Nejran in Medina where they were his guests for three days in the mosque. In the same way, he wrote to al-Moqawqas, sovereign of the Copts in Egypt, to Negus, king of Abyssinia, to Heracles, sovereign of the Byzantine Romans, to Jabala Ibn al-Ayham, king of the Gassanids, to Archbishop Dhaghater, archbishop of the Romans in Constantinople and to Abi al-Hareth ibn 'Alqama, archbishop of Nejran.<sup>1</sup> The Muslims followed up this dialogue both orally and through writing, neglecting it only during the regrettable periods of clashes between the adherents of the two religions, the most tense of which were the period of the Crusades and later the period of Western colonialism.

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<sup>1</sup> Mohammad Hamid-Allah, *Majmou'at al-watha'iq al-siyyasiyya lil-'ahad al-nabawi w-al-khalafat al-rashida* (A collection of political documents of the era of the Prophet and the orthodox caliphs), 3d ed. (Beirut: 1969), 75ff.



The dialogue between the adherents of the two religions was not always pleasant and at times degenerated into argumentative violence which was due to each party's fanaticism regarding its creed. However, the teachings of Islam emphasized three important qualities: contention with the People of the Book should be gentle, Muslims should bear in mind that Christians were nearest to them in love, and any dealings with those who did not involve themselves in aggression against Muslims should be pious and just. God the Exalted said: "And dispute ye not with the People of the Book, except with means better (than mere disputation)" (Qur'an, XXIX:46), and: "And the nearest among [men] in love to the Believers wilt thou find those who say 'We are Christians', because amongst these are men devoted to learning and men who have renounced the world, and they are not arrogant" (Qur'an, V:85), and: "God forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: For God loveth those who are just" (Qur'an, LX:8).

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During the contemporary era, exactly 40 years ago, Islamic-Christian dialogue was renewed. Formal meetings and symposia were held for this purpose in Bermana, Riyadh, the Vatican, Tripoli West, Geneva, Paris, Salzburg, Cairo, Beirut, Ligeon, Tunis, Hong Kong, Cordoba, etc., resulting in the adoption of statements, recommendations and commentaries and in the publication of a good number of books.<sup>2</sup>

The initiative for contemporary dialogue was made by Pope Paul VI, who issued his message "Ecclesiam suam" on 6 August 1964<sup>3</sup> calling for dialogue, shortly after the Second Vatican Convention adopted

<sup>2</sup> See *Nadawat 'al-miyya hawl al-Shari'at al-Islamiyya w-al-huquq al-insan fi-l-Islam* (Practical symposia about the Islamic shariah and human rights in Islam) (Beirut: Dar al-Kutab al-Lubnani, 1973-1974).

<sup>3</sup> The speech of Pope John Paul II at the General Meeting of the Secretariat for Non-Christian Affairs on 3 March 1984.

its famous statement in which Islam was mentioned in favourable terms concerning its call for the worship of the one God and concerning the acts of devotion and moral values contained in its teachings. The statement called for forgetting the past clashes with Islam.<sup>4</sup>

This was followed by the establishment in the Christian world of two bodies devoted to organizing dialogue. They are the Secretariat for Non-Christian Religions in the Vatican whose first head was the late Cardinal Sergio Pignedoli, who was unanimously respected and whose efforts were appreciated by those with whom he dealt, and the Department for Dialogue with Men of Living Faiths and Ideologies in the headquarters of the World Council of Churches in Geneva. Among the unforgettable personalities who worked there are Dr. Stanley J. Smartha (India) and Dr. John Taylor. No counterpart department was established in the Islamic world to deal with the affairs of dialogue except for the Islamic World Association in Mecca initiated by the late Sheikh Mohammad al-Harkan and Dr. Maaruf al-Dawalibi, and the Islamic Missionary Work Society in Tripoli West initiated by Dr. Mahmood al-Sharif.

There is no doubt that this dialogue has created an atmosphere of optimism and understanding between both the Islamic and the Christian worlds. It has also succeeded in removing some misinformation about the two religions, encouraged sincere cooperation in fighting the state of affairs and the trends that the two religions denounce in the intellectual, behavioural, social and political fields and has fostered the establishment of individual friendships between thinkers and learned people adhering to the two religions, which may promote greater understanding and cooperation and the spreading of friendship and peace in the world.

However, the participants in these dialogues—the author among them for quite a long time—have noticed several weak spots or shortcomings that must be mentioned and treated openly and truthfully if the dialogue is to continue successfully, especially since the call for

<sup>4</sup> *The Documents of the Vatican*, vol. 2 (1966), p. 663.

dialogue has recently been renewed during high-level international and Arab conferences.<sup>5</sup>

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The first weak spot is perhaps the absence of a candid, public definition of *dialogue* agreed upon by all parties. It is not enough for the definition to include a spiritual, material call for understanding and love without defining its basic elements and eliminating any possible secret intentions. These would inevitably become public at some point, thus provoking suspicion and ill will that could lead to the miscarriage of dialogue and strip it of its most important components, sincerity, truth and clarity.

Since the initiative relating to contemporary dialogue has come from the Christian world, the documents available on the definition, objectives and intentions of dialogue are necessarily Christian. If it happened that the Islamic world would put forward solid definitions, then most likely both parties would fall into the same mistake, that is, considering dialogue as a veiled means of carrying on missionary work. Those who wish may refer to definitions of dialogue in the following Christian documents:

1. The famous message "Ecclesiam suam" of Pope Paul VI issued in 1964.
2. "Meditations and directives about dialogue and missionary work", a message issued by the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christian Religions in 1984 in commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the beginning of contemporary dialogue.
3. The statement of the consultative symposium organized by the World Council of Churches in Zurich in May 1970.

<sup>5</sup> Among which was the GCC summit of 1991.

It suffices to mention these three documents, the first two of which were issued by the Catholic Church and the third by a group of other churches. Next I refer to the detailed study published by Dr. Carl F. Hallencreutz, a Norwegian theologian, in which he showed that dialogue is the second phase in the development of Christian missionary work, the first phase being from *missionary work* to *evangelism* and the second from *evangelism* to *dialogue*—three degrees of the same substance, which is missionary work.<sup>6</sup>

My intention here is not to embarrass the Christian brothers who believe in Christian missionary work as a part of their faith. I am a Muslim propagandist and I admit this truth about myself and my fellow propagandists, as everyone works to call people to his religion. However, I would like the intentions in this same dialogue to be clear from both parties: If the aim is missionary work, then it is welcome, for they are Christian evangelists and we are Muslim propagandists; if, on the other hand, the aim of the dialogue involves other shared interests, from which missionary work is excluded, let us be forthright and give the dialogue a definition which is devoid of intentions of missionary work, and then let all of us be sincere in this and comply with it.

This was the orientation of an important dialogue held in Tripoli West in February 1976, which was attended by more than 500 theologians, and headed by Cardinal Pignedoli and Dr. Mahmood al-Sharif. It adopted the following definition: "What is meant by dialogue is that the conferees adhering to the two religions exchange information, ideas and truths which enlarge each party's knowledge about the other party's religion, history, civilization and general affairs in order to clarify the possibly existing points of accord as well as those of disaccord, in a sincere and objective way allowing each party to keep its beliefs, obligations and attitudes in an atmosphere of mutual cordiality and respect."

<sup>6</sup> Carl F. Hallencreutz, *Dialogue in Ecumenical History*, Living Faith Series (Geneva, 1971), pp. 57-71.

This definition can be described as prohibitory but not comprehensive, as it does not allow missionary work to be one of the elements of dialogue. However, it only mentions the positive fields of dialogue in summarized form. In fact, it seems that the nature of that gathering—which resulted in the said definition—does not allow more than that, but, as our scholars say, “the good that he does should suffice, since averting evil is better than bringing about good.

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The dialogue between Islam and Christianity should avoid involvement in attempts at syncretism related to the two religions, whether of an open or symbolic nature.

One example of open syncretism was the suggestion by a participant in one dialogue to agree upon a doctrinal formula made up of seven points that he derived from the teachings of both Islam and Christianity. Despite the fact that the seven points were acceptable to both Muslims and Christians (as they accounted for each of them separately), their being mentioned in a seven-point formula gives the impression that this is a substitute for the Islamic creed which—as is well known—consists of two points (an assertion of belief in the unity of God and that Mohammad is His servant and His messenger), in addition to the fact that they are unknown to Christians in this formula. Thus, the suggestion—even if the intention was good—is a meaningless form of syncretism.

An example of symbolic syncretism witnessed during a dialogue held in Beirut was the participants' attendance at two prayers, one in a mosque and the other in a church. In another dialogue, also held in Beirut in November 1977, the meeting was started by an invocation derived from a syncretizing of the Holy Qur'an, the Psalms and the New Testament. However, this was rejected and all the participants accepted with full satisfaction and interest a recitation from the Holy Qur'an followed by another, separate recitation from the New Testament.

If the conferees had allowed religious syncretism, it would have started a torturous process, and the dialogue would have shifted to an apparent search for an intermediate formula, akin to the political compromise that politicians resort to during their negotiations. The difference between the principles of the revealed religions and man-made political ideas should be clear, however.

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Disregard for careful selection of those invited to participate is a weakness in any dialogue. The conferee must be specialized in his field and must be able to express his people's viewpoint on the issues put forward for discussion. In former dialogues, it was observed that the Christian brothers participated as representatives of given churches or specialized university departments. This would provide them with the references necessary for research and the authority to speak in the name of those they represent. The Islamic side—whose members were often guests—received individual invitations, and any individual conferee could not be invited more than once. This hindered adequate preparation and follow-up, as well as the proper representation of the various bodies specialized in and authorized for this objective.

It is assumed that from the Islamic world, representatives of Islamic universities such as Al-Azhar University/Mosque, Imam Mohammad Bin Saoud University, Nadwat al-'Ulama University, or scientific academies such as the Islamic Research Academy, the Islamic Jurisprudence Council, the Islamic Civilization Academy, or prominent Islamic associations such as the Islamic World Association should be invited. In all cases, the linguistic difficulties should be overcome by providing appropriate translation services.

Regarding the selection of conferees, it is not appropriate to allow the younger generation—either in the Islamic or the Christian communities—to take part in official dialogue. The younger generation needs time, knowledge and experience in order to attain the qualifications necessary for this intellectually and emotionally difficult task. It is not

wise to expose either Christians or Muslims to debates from which they might emerge with a shaken faith in their religion. If the aim is to establish cordial relationships between the younger adherents of the two religions, this can be achieved by means of their normal encounters at school and cultural clubs and on sporting teams, together with teaching them the standards of behaviour concerning the proper treatment of the adherents of other religions, without involving them in the problems of dialogue with which only eminently qualified people can cope.

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Of primary concern in dialogue is the careful choice of topics. It is best to avoid the sensitivity of old scholastic, theological controversies and the articles dealing with dissimilitude in its variation because these topics are very specialized. If they are considered unavoidable, however, they should be left to specialists.

Among the vital issues which our Christian brothers would like us to clarify, is the position of Islam towards the non-Muslims' legal and civil status in Muslim society. The Arab countries vary in the relative proportions of Christians in their populations, ranging from the majority, to parity or near parity, to the minority. There are countries which are populated by Muslims and governed by Christians, just as there are Christian countries to which a Muslim minority has immigrated. All this requires candid, detailed talk that would satisfy everyone concerned: the majority as well as the minority, the immigrants and the newcomers.

Islamic jurisprudence has treated this issue and has shown justice in the treatment of non-Muslims in an Islamic society. This is not the author's expression but the title of a valuable book by Professor Dr. Yousef al-Qardhawi, in which he explains the principles of free non-Muslims in the Muslim society.<sup>7</sup> A variety of similar books are available and the reader is invited to refer to them, as they show the justice of

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Yousef al-Qardhawi, *Ghair al-Muslimin fi-l-mujtami' al-Islami* (Non-Muslims in an Islamic society) (Cairo: Maletabat Wahba, 1989).

Islam in the treatment of non-Muslims, the assurance it provides them with regard to their human rights and interests, and the opportunities it gives them for a dignified life and for meaningful participation together with their Muslim compatriots.

However, the salient issue for our Christian brothers is their status as citizens (as opposed to non-Muslims under Muslim rule) and their equality with their Muslim brothers in a society where they are all equal in terms of purity of origin, birth and common history. The resolution to these issues is easy because fairness of treatment is fixed and any deviation is restricted within the contemporary juristic formulas with which the early theoreticians of legal politics did not deal. Their counterparts today should put forward appropriate interpretations to solve this question and to inform the non-Muslim citizens of their equality with respect to the rights and obligations of citizenship, without violating the Islamic quality of a society where Muslims form the legal majority. Likewise, Muslims would like to be reassured by the theoreticians and legislators of the Western societies concerning the freedom of Muslims regarding worship, the education of their children and the practice of their personal statutes in accordance with their faith and the Islamic shariah (the Muslim code of religious law). They also would like to be treated as citizens, not aliens, in the country that accepted their immigration.

Among the topics that deserve to be considered because it is of concern both to Muslims and Christians is the question of violent treatment of persons and attacks on places of worship. These regrettable acts have occurred among the adherents of the two religions in a variety of places, such as Lebanon during the recent civil war, the south of Egypt during a short period of instability, Bosnia-Herzegovina during the fighting that took place after the collapse of the former Yugoslavia and the attempt by the Serbs to establish a Greater Serbia. Wanton violence is a sin in the two religions, and so is aggression against civilians and their property, even during a period of war. The prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) and later his successors (caliphs) granted "peace to all those who claim for themselves the practice of Christian missionary work in the East or the West," undertook to protect them and defend their

"churches, synagogues and houses of prayer, and the monasteries as well as the touristic places whether they were a mountain, a valley, a cave or a populated area" and to guard them against "all harm and misfortune, as well as to render whatever assistance may be necessary." This is documented in the references concerning the Prophet and the era of the orthodox caliphs.<sup>8</sup> Those Muslims or Christians who so desire should refer to such documentation, for it is self-explanatory and refutes any inclination towards violence as invalid and having no relation either to Islam or to Christianity. In addition to this clarification, the dialogue relating to this topic brings into bold relief the history of cordiality and security between Muslims and Christians during the long period of their coexistence.

It also comprises the issue of textbooks, which contain many fallacies and biases and which lead impressionable schoolchildren to adopt an attitude of emotional enmity with no basis. This trend became deep-rooted in the West during the Crusades, as demonstrated by many fair-minded researchers.<sup>9</sup>

One of the principal topics for Islamic-Christian dialogue, and also for Islamic-Christian cooperation, is summed up in the shared efforts by adherents of both religions to fight the evil, wrongdoing and corruption that have appeared everywhere. The adherents of the two religions join forces to combat: atheism; social injustice; exorbitant materialism; moral corruption; dictatorship; political, economic and cultural colonialism; bloody fighting among races and ethnic groups; civil war and the possible genocide involved in it; the wealthy, developed countries' neglect of the poorer world, which is entangled by poverty, underdevelopment and disease; the neglect of human rights; and the pollution of the environment both on earth and in space. These are the great evils which mankind

<sup>8</sup> See especially Mohammad Hamid-Allah, *Majmou'at al-Watha'iq al-Siyasiya*, 153ff.

<sup>9</sup> Among these are Dr. Marcel Boisar, a Swiss theologian who wrote a detailed report about this topic—which is still available—for the Islam and the West Association. Among his works are *The Humanity of Islam*, which was translated into Arabic.

faces and which should be challenged by those who have followed the word of God in the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Qur'an through their mutual efforts and cooperation.

If, as was observed at the end of the cold war, the meeting of scientists from the two political superpowers in the West and in the East for scientific cooperation or for space exploration or humanitarian relief was able to bring them closer to each other, should not the same dictum be applied to the adherents of religions, who prostrate themselves in fear of God? What is more appropriate than for them to cooperate in fighting human corruption as a means of bringing them closer to God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful?

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What is required to lead Islamic-Christian dialogue to success is to distance itself from efforts that might bear its name but which in fact have no relation to it as far as their aim, content and morals are concerned. An example of this is dialogue that takes place for a purely political aim. An example would be the conference that was sponsored by the Soviet government and held in Moscow in 1978 under the title Religions for Peace in the World, which was attended by representatives of nearly all religions.

Its apparent aim was to call for the easing of tension between the East and the West and to avert nuclear danger. In fact, the Soviet Union made this call to support its position in the cold war. Even so, the call would not have been denounced, if the dialogue had not been carried forward in such a blatantly exploitative manner. For example, the conference was to discuss a document which accused religions of being one of the causes of war. The Muslim delegation denounced this document and required its withdrawal as a condition for their presence. The organizers of the conference withdrew it, because their real aim was merely to obtain the approval of the representatives of religions for the Soviet Union's call to give up the arms race between the East and the West.

Another more recent example was the Conference on the Unity of Religions held at Saint Catherine in the Sinai in 1984 and 1986. It was clear that the real aim behind holding the conference was to call for the normalization of relations between the Arabs and Israel.

We do not disparage the adherents of the different religions for putting forth their points of view concerning political affairs, or rather the affairs of human injustice caused by politics, but we consider religion to be far above being used as a cover for political capriciousness. We want religion, whenever it utters a word, to be a word of truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth for the sake of the only, truthful God, not for the interest of a group of people at the expense of another. God the Exalted said: "And let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety" (Qur'an, V:9).

Hence, we are surprised that no Christian-Islamic meeting was held for the purpose of denouncing the crimes of extermination, torture, rape and expulsion which have been committed in Bosnia-Herzegovina by the Serbs.

As for the question of the Middle East and the undeniable rights of the Palestinians to the territory of Palestine, we notice that the statements issued by the Eastern churches are balanced, fair and characterized by a spirit of religion and justice. However, we remain puzzled by statements issued by other churches which do not fail to condemn anti-Semitic aggression and consider it a sin, and which are quick to point out Israel's right to the land mentioned in the New Testament; their words concerning the rights of the Arabs and Arab refugees, however, lack the same vehemence and sympathy.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, the statement of the closing consultative session on the question of the Palestinian refugees, Nicosia 1969, issued by the Eastern churches, the content of which is just and balanced; the statement of the World Council of Churches, Amsterdam 1948, on anti-Semitism; the statement of the World Council of Churches, Canterbury, 1969, entitled "A statement about the Middle East", which was fair-minded in its mentioning of

Ultimately, we would like the Islamic-Christian dialogue to be rid of political exploitation. If a word about politics is required from it, it should be spoken in a spirit of religion and justice.

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An example of dialogue generating a diversity of opinions is the dialogue known as open debate. Such debates spread during the late eighteenth century in India through English and other evangelists. Among the most famous of them was the great debate which took place in 1854 between the American clergyman Rev. G. Founder and Sheikh Rahmat Allah Kiranwi, who was Indian. Sheikh Rahmat Allah's views are stated in his well-known book *The Revelation of the Truth*.<sup>11</sup>

These debates were continued recently between Sheikh Ahmed Deedat from South Africa and evangelists such as the American preacher Jimmy Swaggart. They were also broadcast on radio and television.

Those who are eager to maintain a sound Islamic-Christian dialogue and to see it following a path that would lead to understanding and harmony, believe that such debate should be restricted to specialists proceeding in accordance with calm, objective, scientific conditions. It is worthwhile to record the debate in writings to be read by those who have the capacity to consider their contents. Releasing such a record to the public at large, however, is likely to turn the debate into what the scholars of the two religions would see as an ugly and perhaps detrimental argument.

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Palestinian rights vis-à-vis other rights; and the statement made by the Catholic Church in April 1973 and the study issued by the World Council of Churches concerning the consultative session held in Cartagena in January 1974 entitled "Biblical interpretation and its bearing regarding the situation in the Middle East". It supports the right of Israel to its land mentioned in the New Testament.

<sup>11</sup> Rahmat Allah bin Khalil al-Kiranwi, *The Revelation of the Truth* (Riyadh, 1989) (with other editions and translations).

I have tried in this article to be absolutely clear and not to hide a truth or cover up a problem. It has not been my intention to offend or cause embarrassment to anyone. I simply meant to uncover the facts so as to have everyone cooperate in pointing the dialogue in the right direction, to make the encounter successful and to reach a point of friendship and cooperation.

We can conclude that Islamic-Christian dialogue is beneficial, even necessary in some cases, when caution is exercised and the means for success are in place.

If the intentions are good on both sides, if the dialogue does not incline to suspicion and evangelism, if it is restricted to those who are truly qualified to take part in it, if the conferees focus on the exchange of information and on cooperation in the fields where agreement is reached for the purposes of good deeds, charity, the general welfare of mankind, the support of truth and the abolishment of open injustice, it is then expected that the dialogue will spread friendship and peace among the adherents of the two religions, especially in the countries where they already coexist, either as a result of historical origin as in Egypt and Lebanon or as the result of a reality that cannot be neglected, in view of the waves of immigration all over the world.

Let a tone of pacification be everyone's goal. The Muslims' religion calls upon them to be pious, fair and just and to treat others in a friendly manner, and likewise the Christians are assured that "blessed are the peace makers" (Matthew 5:9). Peace be upon those who have followed the true religion.

## AN ARAB CHRISTIAN VIEW (GENEVA)

*Tarek Mitri*

Christian-Muslim dialogue is not a new phenomenon, but since the 1960s it has followed a different path from that of previous confrontations marked by a dualist vision of the world.

Although the past experience, marked by rivalry, overshadowed exchanges and peaceful relations, it could not prevent many Christians and Muslims from sincerely seeking mutual knowledge and an understanding of religious differentness. In the context of a religiously pluralist existence, there were attempts at dialogue as well as at various modes of interaction in the realm of human thought.

It is true that traditional worlds were self-sufficient and closed to each other. The tendency to interpret the religions of other people in a reductionist manner prevailed. Yet Islamic history bears witness, during the formative phase of Arab civilization, to the ability to integrate the cultures of the conquered peoples, favouring an Arab Christian contribution. Arab Christians were eager to offer their contribution and aspired, beyond theological apologetics, to an authentic dialogue seen as an expression of a symbiosis at the popular level. Christians shared with Muslims a common understanding of God's transcendence, trust in Him

## THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

and surrender to His will.<sup>1</sup> They emphasized the role of reason in searching for better communication and even convergence in religious and worldly matters.

In modern times, the emerging national thinking of Muslims and Christians in many countries, based on cultural bonds and on shared interests and destiny, was distinct, as opposed to separate, from religious affiliation. This has led to a new relationship characterized by mutual respect and the overcoming of many of the previous adversities.

At the global level, the process of decolonization brought about a somewhat more equitable Christian-Muslim relation and created better conditions for dialogue as an alternative to exclusion or subjugation.

In conjunction with these developments, religious world-views interacted with universalist and humanist ideas and were influenced by greater mingling and religious pluralism. Christians had to face new challenges, not only in recognizing the reality of religious pluralism but also in understanding its significance and implication for their own identity. Consequently, they had to consider a new epistemological approach to the religious "other", Islam in particular.

### THE EXPERIENCE OF DIALOGUE

Christian-Muslim dialogue has gained momentum since the 1960s. Many Christian circles do not, as in the past, concentrate on evangelization but instead understand witnessing to one's faith as a mutual process and emphasize encounter and cooperation, in the context of a respectful attitude towards Muslims as well as of a search for an objective knowledge of Islam liberated from the burdens of history.

<sup>1</sup> See Patriarch Ignatios Hazim, "Le Christianisme et la rencontre des religions et des cultures", in *Contacts* (Paris, 1984); and in Arabic, *Min Khibrat Antakia ila Da'watihā* (From the experience of Antioch to its vocation) (Beirut, 1985).

## An Arab Christian view (Geneva)

This has led them to consider religious plurality as part of God's design, implying a new approach to the salvation of non-Christians and their relation to truth, beyond what was stated in the previous affirmation that "outside the Church there is no salvation."

When the Catholic Church, the World Council of Churches<sup>2</sup> and a number of Western churches initiated dialogue activities, they were attentive to the experience of Christians who had historically lived amidst Muslim neighbours. Moreover, these Christians involved themselves, in varying degrees, as partners in dialogue. Some of them were critical of its "idealism" as they tried to derive benefit from the renewed Christian interest in the Muslim world to remind Westerners of the need for solidarity with their brethren and of the need to be sensitive to their concerns. On the other hand, there were many Eastern Christians who saw in dialogue a major commitment and were conscious of their role in bridge-building between Christians and Muslims, in view of their ability to communicate with both parties. Moreover, quite a number of Eastern Christians were critical of Western Christianity and, having been adversely affected by its domination or pressures, found themselves bound more closely to the Muslims.<sup>3</sup> This critical stance introduced new perspectives into dialogue at the global level that may enrich it, as it calls on Christians to review their own history.

Needless to say, a sincere desire for dialogue and the search for a new culture shaped by its imperatives do not necessarily mean that its effectiveness and influence have measured up to expectations.

<sup>2</sup> See the publications of the World Council of Churches: Stuart Brown, comp., *Meeting in Faith* (Geneva: WCC, 1989), and *Issues in Christian-Muslim Relations: Ecumenical Considerations* (Geneva: WCC, 1992). The first offers a historical account of WCC dialogue activities. The second, a document received by the Central Committee, raises issues and proposes approaches to discussing them.

<sup>3</sup> This is exemplified by Metropolitan George Khodr in his article "Al-Masihiyyun al-'Arab wa al-Gharb" (Arab Christians and the West) in *al-Masihiyyun al-'Arab* (The Arab Christians) (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Abhath al-'Arabiyya, 1981).



There were, among both Christians and Muslims, forms of resistance and expressions of hesitation. It was not easy for Christians to change their self-understanding and their attitudes to Muslims, to be free from the grip of history. Nor were the Muslims able to disregard the past with all its conflicts, and to opt for trust instead of suspicion. In addition, the economic, political and cultural power relations at the global level, in spite of the relative changes referred to above, fell short of ensuring the necessary balance for a dialogue free of vested interests, including those of Western supremacy.

The Christian and Muslim opposition to or criticism of dialogue can be grouped into two types. There are, on the one hand, those who consider dialogue as a form of compromise of the truth and the obligation to proclaim the truth through missionary work and *da'wa*. On the other hand, we find those who stress its naïveté, which is not able, in spite of the sincerity of its proponents (or a large number of them), to hide the disparities. Dialogue functions in this respect as a mere ornament and serves the purpose of covering up motivations that contradict its stated objectives.

This is complicated further by the problem of the representativeness of the partners to dialogue. It is true that the claim to speak on behalf of one's community and consequently to engage it in abiding by what is agreed upon is not formally made. But each partner is inclined to look upon the other as fairly representative. And whenever this representativeness is denied, the sincerity of dialogue and its effectiveness are called into question.

Notwithstanding all of these difficulties, dedicated efforts were pursued within each community to promote the values and credibility of dialogue and to highlight its intellectual and spiritual promises, in enabling partners to address problems and overcome the obstacles on the road to cooperation in the search for freedom, justice and peace. Dialogue initiatives have multiplied in a context of enriching diversity. They are no longer confined to an élite or to a group of marginal people.

The number of initiators has also multiplied. And Muslims joined in an effort which was at its beginning primarily led by Christians.

Dialogue was able to achieve some of its objectives, although it fell short of its more ambitious aspirations. One can mention, by way of illustration, the progress achieved in the field of education and religious media, in the areas of cooperation towards the resolution of conflicts that threaten peaceful relations between Christians and Muslims and in developing links of solidarity such as the ones established by a number of Christian institutions in the West engaged in the defense of Muslim minority rights.

### DIALOGUE AND THE PRESENT CHALLENGES

A renewed and intensified dialogue effort is required in the present situation, in view of the gravity of problems pertaining to Christian-Muslim relations.

Muslims and Islam are the victims of hostile campaigns in the West. In the name of the confrontation between civilizations, resurgent after the decline of ideological polarization, an enemy image of Islam is being built up. The "awakening of political Islam" is depicted as a security threat to the "civilized world" and an obstacle to the evolution of societies in the South that are on a path of democracy and human rights.

This offensive is not limited to the condemnation of extremism and exaggerated or violent forms of self-assertion. It reaches well beyond this to portray Islam in an "essentialist" light, barely drawing a distinction between the majority of its adherents and the movements described as "fundamentalist". The latter are often vaguely defined, and their role is not analysed at all, in relation to social root causes and political determinants.

The aggressive attitudes are often coupled with feelings of superiority and a tendency to exclude the Muslim world from the rest of contemporary humanity.

In the context of problems faced by highly industrialized societies, including economic recession and unemployment, foreigners—Muslims in particular—are portrayed as “scarecrows” that could become “scapegoats”.

A number of governments and opinion-makers in secular States point to a contradiction between Islam and modernity, inviting Muslims to transform their religious tradition in accordance with the ideas of enlightenment and post-enlightenment or be excluded from public life and restricted in their community rights.<sup>4</sup> Islam is judged on the basis of criteria of modernity, without the least embarrassment nor the slightest recognition that this is presently questioned in the West itself through the “return of the sacred” manifested in a new religiosity and in the light of post-modern challenges. Another tendency is also worth noting. National and ethnic conflicts as well as problems of power sharing and the regulation of pluralism are looked upon as religious confrontations, especially between Christians and Muslims. The cases of Lebanon, Sudan, Nigeria and Armenia-Azerbaijan will serve as examples. In the same vein, and for other reasons that we will not dwell on here, Western powers have failed to adopt a policy on Bosnia-Herzegovina, where most of the victims are Muslims, that would restore what has been taken away or secure a fair settlement.

The problems of minorities in the Muslim world are also magnified. It is true that these problems exist in a number of countries, but it is equally true that they cannot be solved adequately except in relation to the problems of majorities. The minority rights advocacy, if it is without a genuine concern for the totality of peoples to which these minorities belong, functions as a pretext for foreign intervention. Moreover, the amplification of minority rights may hide the inability to address them

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<sup>4</sup> This is illustrated by the profusion of literature in which traditional stereotypes are reiterated. It suffices here to mention a rather recent book, widely publicized in France, whose significance lies in its polemical tone. See Jean-Claude Barreau, *De l'Islam en general et du monde moderne en particulier* (Paris: Le Pre aux Clercs, 1991).

and may provide justification for a policy of resignation, leading at times to the announcement of the “death” of the concerned minorities.<sup>5</sup>

### TOWARDS A CULTURE OF DIALOGUE

The tasks that lie ahead of those who renew their commitment to Christian-Muslim dialogue are manifold and cannot be enumerated in this short paper. Likewise, they cannot be handled properly unless the “culture of dialogue” is rooted in the collective consciousness of Christians and Muslims alike. The development of such a culture is certainly long-term and involves a sustained search, yet it does not afford delay; nor can it remain the prerogative of intellectuals. By creating favourable conditions for a common approach to problems that divide people, it has a direct bearing on the shorter-term call to cooperation. The urgency of the present situation should not be used as an excuse not to give the culture of dialogue the full consideration that it deserves.

A few criteria need to be examined in relation to the thorny issues of our time.

First and foremost is intellectual integrity. It implies that we free ourselves from our image of the other, be it inherited or “borrowed”, in order to know people the way they like themselves to be known. But this goes further, namely to looking at the other culture in the context of its origins, so as to avoid the trap of over-generalizing and of indiscriminately consuming whatever viewpoint is put forward by the media, the visual media in particular.

The second criterion pertains to refraining from the use of double standards or comparing what is not comparable. It is not infrequent to find that the original religious principles of one's community are being paralleled with the historical realities of the other community. The

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<sup>5</sup> A recently published book on Eastern Christians suggests that they are on their way to extinction. See Jean-Pierre Valognes, *Vie et mort des Chrétiens d'Orient* (Paris: Fayard, 1994).

inclination to use double standards is often associated with the use of a double language, the first being addressed to one's own group and the other meant for open dialogue with the other group. Needless to say, it is not acceptable for us to talk about others or write about them as if they do not listen or read, and then to engage in dialogue on the assumption that they have not listened or read.

The third criterion concerns the need to disengage dialogue, at least relatively, from the political and numerical balances of power. Dialogue cannot change realities if it is only a reflection of the existing power relations. Its success is conditional on its ability to influence them through mutual empowerment.

Last but not least, there is a need to draw a distinction between the realms of politics and religion, in the sense of rejecting artificial or undue politicization or, better, "politification". Religion can be used to justify political interests or legitimize positions. The call to discernment is not a call to separation between religion and politics, neither in Islam, to be sure, nor in Christianity. For Muslims emphasize the inextricable link between religion, the world and the State, and Christians, in contrast to what is sometimes attributed to them, do not consider their religion a purely spiritual affair. Both Christianity and Islam bear witness, although in two different manners, to the fact that the truths of revelation guide the involvement of their followers in worldly affairs.

### FUTURE ORIENTATIONS

An elaborate agenda for Christian-Muslim dialogue is beyond the scope of this short article. However, a few timely and thorny issues are worth mentioning.

The **first issue** relates to the role of religious sentiments in conflicts, between and within nations. It is true that these conflicts are not religious, and moreover, religion cannot be held responsible for the conflict. Nevertheless, such affirmations do not close the debate. Christians and Muslims are called upon to join in the effort of resolving

them and, more important, to help their respective communities immunize themselves against divisions and sedition, where religion is used as a weapon against the other and ultimately against oneself.

The **second issue** concerns human rights, including community rights, which are entangled in a dual problem. On the one hand, human rights are selectively utilized to dominate the countries of the South. On the other hand, a number of countries invoke the right to cultural difference in order to justify despotism and repression in the "developing" world. Human rights advocacy is also confined, at times, to intra-Christian and intra-Muslim solidarity. It is therefore crucial that Christians and Muslims join efforts, from the standpoint of their religious tradition, in cultivating a common approach to human rights. This involves the search for a common understanding of the universality of human rights in a way that would maintain the balance between rights and duties as well as between individual rights and community rights. Such an understanding would be the base of a Christian-Muslim commitment to defend human rights, including minority rights, wherever they were violated or threatened.

The **third area** is related to the educational, social and media orientation of local and international institutions associated with religious groups. These institutions are called upon to refrain from competition, and to orient themselves to address common urgent problems and combat prejudices, distortions and various forms of coercion and aggressive proselytism, whether open or undeclared.

Finally, authentic dialogue between people of faith cannot bear fruit unless it is conducted in a spirit of mutual openness and emulation of good deeds and, above all, in obedience to God.



## **HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY**

## REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY IN THE ARAB REGION: AN OVERVIEW

*Raghid Kazem El-Solh*

### DEVELOPMENT

The idea of representative democracy has been a focus of considerable interest in the Arab world since the early days of the twentieth century. This interest has undergone four distinct stages. The first stage dates to the time of Ottoman rule, when a substantial section of the Arab intelligentsia joined the Ottoman reform movement, which eventually culminated in the Constitutional Revolution of 1908. In the aftermath of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, these reformers founded an Arab government in Damascus which was "monarchical, secular and parliamentary."<sup>1</sup> When this government was overthrown by the French occupying forces in 1920, and when the Arab world came under the domination of the victorious European powers, liberation movements emerged in various parts of the region. While some of the movements concentrated on the goal of independence, others considered the quest for

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<sup>1</sup> Khairiyyeh Qasmiyyeh, *Al-Hukumat al-'Arabiyya fi Dimashq* (The Arab government in Damascus) (Cairo, 1971), p. 291.

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

democracy and constitutional political life to be part and parcel of their anti-colonial platform.<sup>2</sup>

In the second stage, which emerged in the post-colonial period, the new national élites, especially in the Arab East, attempted to implement the principles of parliamentary democracy amidst serious difficulties. The latter were caused by a variety of factors such as rising public expectations, scarcity of resources, inter-élite rivalries, and limited administrative skills among some of the new rulers. However, it may be argued that these difficulties would not have been insurmountable if they had not been compounded by external pressures, culminating in the defeat of the Arab armies in the 1948 war against the Israelis.

The defeat in Palestine ushered in the third stage, in which the governments of Egypt and Syria were overthrown, and the idea of parliamentary democracy was discredited among the Arab public. Throughout this period, Arab ruling élites, and more specifically the republican regimes among them, emulated the Soviet system of government. They borrowed a number of political principles, including Leninist ideas concerning the ruling élite and its control over State and society, which became popular among some Arab political strata. The Stalinist experience regarding the transformation of a rural society into an industrialized one, and the pressing need to defeat the Axis powers, were invoked to justify the undemocratic policies in parts of the Arab world. This political trend could be justified as long as the Soviet system appeared to be successful. However, when it began to disintegrate and collapse, it became virtually impossible to continue to use it as a reference model.

In fact, the Soviet system's loss of credibility within the Arab political arena was discernible before the fall of the Communist single-

<sup>2</sup> Tariq al-Bishri, *Dirasat fi al-Dimoqratiyya al-Misriyya* (Studies in Egyptian democracy) (Cairo, 1987), pp. 107-123. See also Fadil S. Aql and Riad Honein, *Michel Zakkour* (Beirut, 1988), pp. 14-17; and Abdel-Karim Ghallab, *Difa'an 'an al-Dimoqratiyya* (Defending democracy) (Tangier, 1966), pp. 107-109.

## Representative democracy in the Arab region: an overview

party systems in Eastern Europe. It had already begun to spread by the late 1970s, bringing about the fourth stage of the Arab experimentation with democracy. This stage is characterized by the increasing scrutiny and criticism to which authoritarian Arab regimes are being subjected.

### SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

The challenge against authoritarian rule has come from different sources. For example, it emanated from within the ruling élites themselves, thus lending credibility to the theory of Vilfredo Pareto regarding the changes which led ruling élites to modify their policies.<sup>3</sup> More important perhaps, authoritarianism was challenged by intellectual groups who had become convinced, particularly after the defeat of the Arab armies in 1967, that democracy provides a better form of government than any other rival political system.<sup>4</sup> These developments provided the impetus for the spread of democracy in the Arab region. However, it should be noted that these advances are confronted by a number of obstacles which inhibit the democratization of the Arab world. Some of these obstacles are discernible in various schools of thought prevalent in the region, of which three will be singled out for discussion.

The **first school of thought** tends to openly and decisively reject the concept of parliamentary democracy, an attitude shared by various Islamist groups and leaders, classical Marxist-Leninists, and revolutionary nationalists. Notwithstanding the marked ideological differences among these political groups, they tend to unite over a number of criticisms against parliamentary democracy. Foremost amongst the criticisms raised by Islamist groups is that representative democracy is a system of

<sup>3</sup> See Geraint Parry, *Political Elites* (London, 1976), pp. 45-50.

<sup>4</sup> Early activities of these groups include: the seminar organized by the Moroccan Forum for Debate and Thought on 'The Problematics of Democracy in the Arab Nation' (Rabat, November 1980); the seminar organized by the Center for Arab Unity Studies on 'The Predicament of Democracy in the Arab Nation' (Cyprus, November 1983); and the emergence of the Arab Organization for Human Rights that same year.

government which does not provide the right answers to the question of power, authority and legislation. Those Islamist groups which are opposed to democracy—for example the Algerian *Al-Taqqir wal-Hijra*—believe that legislation is God's prerogative, while democracy gives this prerogative to the people and to their elected representatives. What distinguishes these extremist Islamist groups from the more established Islamist parties such as the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in Algeria, Al-Nahda in Tunisia, and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, is their refusal to use the parliamentary mechanism as a springboard for achieving their objective of Islamizing the Arab world, hence the severe criticism levelled by them against the FIS in Algeria for participating in the elections.<sup>5</sup>

The established Islamist parties are undergoing a period of intense debate over the issue of representative democracy. They have attempted to integrate some basic components of democracy within their programmes, and have in this respect exhibited a certain degree of flexibility with regard to addressing the questions of political participation and the institutionalization of pluralism. If this trend continues and gains further ground within these established Islamist parties, then it is feasible that they will play a significant role within the pre-democracy movement in the Arab region.<sup>6</sup>

The classical Marxist-Leninists in the Arab world reject parliamentary democracy as a system of government which accords the bourgeoisie a power monopoly which they believe should be the prerogative of the working classes since they comprise the majority of the population. For their part, the revolutionary nationalists in the Arab world oppose parliamentary democracy on the grounds that it exposes the region to foreign domination through clientele ruling élites, or, as maintained by the National Charter of the United Arab Republic (Egypt): "The façade

<sup>5</sup> See *Al-Hayat*, 23 April 1993.

<sup>6</sup> See John L. Esposito and James P. Piscatori, "Democratization and Islam", *Middle Eastern Journal*, vol. 45, No. 3 (1991), pp. 427-440; also Gudrun Krämer, "Islamic notions of democracy", *Middle East Report* (July-August 1993), pp. 2-8.

of democracy only represented the reactionaries who were not prepared to break off relations with imperialism."<sup>7</sup> As an alternative to this system, revolutionary nationalists call for people's or direct democracy under which sovereignty will reside with the Arab masses, and government is expected to express the general will of the people, to use Rousseau's term.

Critics of the above-discussed subgroups do not overlook the difficulties of representative government. However, they refuse to acknowledge the Islamists as the enforcers of God's will, or the Marxist-Leninists and the revolutionary nationalists in the Arab world as the undisputed representatives of the working class or the masses. Rather, they perceive them as political groups competing for power and attempting to monopolize it, thus exposing their mundane authoritarian tendencies.<sup>8</sup>

The **second school of thought** on the subject of democracy is distinguished by its attitude towards secularism as a *sine qua non* of authentic democratization of Arab regimes and societies. The secular democrats of the Arab world take the Kemalist experience in Turkey as a reference model. For them, the following explanatory note attached to the Turkish Civil Code of 1926 is of special significance: "The goal of legislation is not to maintain old customs or beliefs having their origin in religion but to assure the economic and social unity of the nation. . . . The modern State excludes religion from its fields of action and respects all religious beliefs which stay within their confines. For countries whose citizens belong to different religions, it is even more necessary to break

<sup>7</sup> Abdel-Moghny Said, *Arab Socialism* (London, 1971), p. 107. See also *Al-Tajareb al-Dimoqratiyya fi al-Watan al-'Arabi* (The experiences of democracy in the Arab world), papers presented to the Moroccan Forum for Debate and Thought, Rabat, November 1980 (Beirut, 1971), no author/editor.

<sup>8</sup> See "Hawl al-mawqif men al-quwwa al-mutasattira bil-din" (On the position of political groups using religion as a cover). Information pamphlet issued by the General Secretariat of the National Progressive Unionist Party in Egypt (17 May 1993).

with religion."<sup>9</sup> The secularists hope that Arab governments will follow the same course as a prelude to the democratization of the Arab region.

Critics of this second school of thought do not deny the contribution of secularism to the development of democracy in Western societies. However, they do not take for granted the relation between democracy and secularism. For example, Nazism, fascism and communism are secularist ideologies, but have not established democratic systems. Furthermore, according to a critic such as the prominent Moroccan intellectual Mohammad Abed al-Jabiri, secularism does not have the same relevance to democracy in the Arab region as it has in the West, since "Islam is not a church to be separated from the State."<sup>10</sup>

A **third school of thought** includes critics of the first and second schools referred to above, and those who believe that the principles of democracy should be adapted to the specific socio-economic conditions in the Arab region. However, this third school may also be divided into subgroups who are diametrically opposed with respect to the meaning and purpose of such adaptation. The first subgroup tends to exaggerate the differences among Arab societies on the one hand, and those societies which have implemented some form of parliamentary democracy on the other. Adherents of this belief suggest that the process of democratization in the Arab region should differ from that which has taken place in non-Arab societies. While this is a point which may need to be taken into consideration, the fact remains that it also implies that it is almost impossible to democratize the Arab region in the foreseeable future, if at all. The Arabization of democracy, as imagined by this subgroup, is reduced to an intellectual framework or policies which divest democracy of its basic tenets.

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in Daoud Khairallah, "Secular democracy", paper presented to the workshop From War to Peace: The Lebanon of the Future (Ottawa, November 1991), organized by the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted in Faisal Jalloul, ed., *Hiwar al-Mashriq wal-Maghrib* (Dialogue between the East and the West) (Casablanca, 1990), p. 45.

The second subgroup maintains that the specific conditions of Arab societies do not constitute barriers to the call for democratization in terms of a creative, genuine, and authentic approach to achieve this end. In effect, this particular approach pertains to such factors as the pace of democratization, the role played by different social actors during this process, and the way it is influenced by external forces. As Eliya Harik argues, it is quite natural to underline the role played by the individual and by voluntary organizations in the functioning of parliamentary democracies in industrialized societies. However, in Arab societies, these organizations are not strong enough to perform the same role. Alternatively, or perhaps together with nascent voluntary organizations, Harik suggests that communal organizations based on primordial loyalties (e.g. family, tribe, religious community) can act as forces which cushion social tensions and limit the power of the State, both of which are essential to the development of democracy in the Arab societies, particularly in the Gulf region.<sup>11</sup>

### DRAWBACKS AND OBSTACLES

Among the three schools of thought, those who show minimal or no support for parliamentary democracy currently dominate the political scene in the Arab world. However, this is neither a static situation, nor does it imply that the fate of the movement towards representative democracy in the Arab region is sealed. Nonetheless, it is a reminder of the uncertainties and obstacles which constrain this movement. Among the factors inhibiting the process of democratization is, as Samuel Huntington rightly emphasizes, the influence of culture.<sup>12</sup> Thus a link may be established between, on the one hand, the prevalence of non-democratic political culture, and, on the other hand, the emergence and continuation in power of authoritarian Arab regimes throughout the past decades. The non-democratic political culture adhered to by the Arab

<sup>11</sup> *Al-Hayat*, 15 December 1992.

<sup>12</sup> Samuel Huntington, "Democracy's third wave", *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 2, No. 2 (1991), pp. 12-35.



political classes has helped legitimize authoritarian regimes. Huntington attributes this reality to the impact of Islam which "is often cited as being hostile to democracy," and which he believes explains the weak commitment to democracy in Islamic and Arab societies.

However, Huntington's observations appear to overlook or underestimate several facts: to begin with, the movement for democracy which existed in the Arab region since the early days of the twentieth century; second, the contributions of some Islamist thinkers and activists to this movement;<sup>13</sup> and third, though Nazism, fascism and Stalinism emerged in Christian cultural areas, it would nevertheless be erroneous to suggest that the ensuing regimes were outgrowths of Christianity. In fact, these ideologies which originated in the West have had a major influence on the anti-democratic components of present Arab political culture.

Economic and social factors have had an obvious influence on the development of democracy in the Arab region. One area where these factors converge to furnish the grounds for the democratization of the political system is generally related to the emergence of a "rough balance" between the social forces within a particular country.<sup>14</sup> With the emergence of oil-based economies and statist ideologies, this balance became undone in the Arab region. These factors have given ruling élites almost unlimited powers, and, in some cases, trivialized the role and significance of other political and social agents. An example which attests to this reality is the Kuwaiti experience of democracy, where, in spite of Kuwait's being an oil economy, parliamentary life managed to exist for a number of years. This is to some extent attributable to the balance which existed between, on the one hand, the ruling élite and, on the other,

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, Khalid Mohammad Khalid, *Al-Dimocratiyya Abadan (Democracy forever)* (Cairo, 1958); Ahmad Kamal Abul-Majed, *Rou'ya Islamiyya Mu'asara* (A contemporary Islamic view) (Cairo, 1991); Fahmi Houwaidi, *Al-Islam wal-Dimocratiyya* (Islam and democracy) (Cairo, 1993); and Azzam Tamimi, ed., *Power-Sharing in Islam* (London, 1993).

<sup>14</sup> See Barrington Moore, Jr., *Social Origin of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Aylesbury, UK, 1974), p. 417.

the merchant class with its access to material resources via its commercial activities.

Another area where economic and social conditions play an important part in the process of democratization is related to the living conditions of the Arab lower and middle classes. The latter, which generally have an objective interest in the propagation of parliamentary democracy, are experiencing increasing hardship due to economic recession and stagnation in the Arab region. These economic pressures have contributed to the radicalization of some segments among these classes, and have played a part in encouraging them to seek immediate solutions to their problems. In this respect, the parliamentary system appears to them to be too slow, and thus loses its appeal. It should be added that these economic pressures are also affected by external factors, such as declining oil revenues, and structural adjustment programmes encouraged by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, both of which have played a role in exacerbating social tensions. More important, these external factors have inadvertently played a more or less direct role in undermining the democratic process in the Arab region. For example, the former Soviet Union tended to support Arab regimes which emulated its system of government. According to former CIA agent Miles Copeland, the United States administration also played an important role in the overthrow of the civilian government of Shukri Al-Quwatly in Syria.<sup>15</sup> The pressures which resulted from the establishment of Israel in 1948, and the expulsion of the Palestinians to neighbouring Arab States, also contributed to the demise of the quasi-parliamentary systems in Egypt and Syria in the late 1940s and early 1950s, and thus to the relegation of democracy to the political fringes during the ensuing period.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 19 June 1989.

<sup>16</sup> See Walid Qazziha, *Revolutionary Transformations in the Arab World* (London, 1975), pp. 12-13.

### PROSPECTS

As the 1991 Report of the Arab Human Rights Organization reiterates, the movement for democracy in the Arab world has suffered a number of setbacks and has been subjected to various predicaments during the past years.<sup>17</sup> The annulment of the results of the Algerian elections in 1992 is an obvious though by no means unique example of these setbacks, and above all an indication of the entrenchment of forces which oppose the process of democratization in the Arab region. This example also reflects the social and economic conditions which hinder this process. It is difficult to predict whether these adverse conditions will improve in the foreseeable future. What is clear at this stage is that the oil economies and statist policies will continue to strengthen the power of the State *vis-à-vis* civil and communal society. Though ruling élites in Arab countries with a statist orientation have embarked upon an economic course which stresses market liberalization and privatization, with a commensurate shrinking of the public sector, it remains doubtful whether these changes will actually encourage the emergence of a more pluralistic society. One fact which lends credibility to this pessimistic prognosis is the sale of privatized assets and interests to some of the inner core of the ruling élites. This newly emergent bourgeoisie is unlikely to constitute a social and political force which will play a role in curbing the power of the State. On the contrary, it can be expected to reinforce the hold of the State over society. Added to this is economic recession and its contribution to the proliferation of anti-democratic groups and practices. While the Arab Gulf States have the potential of escaping, or minimizing the impact of, some of these adverse ramifications, including the widening gap between the industrialized and non-industrialized worlds,<sup>18</sup> the capital-poor Arab States with their high fertility rates, massive external debts and limited resources are less fortunate.

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<sup>17</sup> Arab Human Rights Organization, *Huquq al-Insan fi al-Watan al-'Arabi* (Human rights in the Arab world) (Cairo, 1991), p. 9.

<sup>18</sup> See UNDP, *Human Development Report 1992* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 34-35.

This bleak scenario is obviously not conducive to the flourishing of democracy in the Arab region. However, a counter-scenario being propagated by many world leaders is the peace process between Arabs and Israelis. This is based on the belief that the peace process will have positive political and economic effects in the region, leading to an invigorated drive towards democracy in the Arab world. While it is true that peace, and the expected reductions in military spending, would enable Arab States to redirect their energies towards more effective use of financial and human resources, to meet the social and economic needs of their populations, and that it furthermore would provide a climate conducive to the dissemination of ideas and practices which reinforce human rights, equality and tolerance, it should nevertheless be noted that these expectations need to be qualified. Thus peace imposed primarily to the benefit of one party to the process may, on the contrary, foment more tensions, intolerance and violence. The most obvious example which comes to mind is the peace treaty concluded between the victorious powers of the First World War and Germany. The Germans came to associate this treaty with national humiliation, a feeling further reinforced by the strictness with which the victorious powers reinforced it. This undoubtedly contributed to the rise of the Nationalist Socialist Party led by Adolf Hitler, who manipulated this feeling of national humiliation to the detriment of democracy in Germany, in Europe and beyond. In other words, if peace is perceived in the Arab region as being a device which furthers the interests of Israel at the expense of the interests of the Arabs, then it is feasible that history may repeat itself, thus dealing a blow to efforts to democratize the Arab world.

Against this rather pessimistic view one may argue that the strength of pro-democracy feeling in the Arab world should not be minimized or overlooked. As mentioned above, the subject of democracy has forced itself onto the agendas of many political groups and activists in the Arab world. The majority of the latter genuinely advocate democracy, or at least claim to do so. Either way, this is an indication that the movement towards democracy is managing to hold the moral high ground. Arab democrats can take advantage of this fact and exert more concerted efforts in actively pursuing their aim.

A first step towards this end is for Arab democrats to identify the forces which can be roped in to promote the democratic process. Advocates of democracy may be found among the ruling élites, among different classes, and among individuals of varied cultural and educational backgrounds. Adherents of democracy need to avoid ideological biases which hinder recognition of this reality and thus foster the gap which separates the different social forces which could underpin the democratic process.

Another measure which Arab democrats may undertake is to expand cooperation and communication among themselves. Increasing the number of seminars, workshops and conferences is one way of achieving this goal. Publishing a register to include the names/addresses of pro-democracy groups and agendas of major gatherings and events focusing on democracy, as well as a list of leading published works on the subject, would also be a major step towards effective networking among the social forces supporting the democratization of the Arab world. Moreover, establishing a forum which would function as a clearing-house for groups promoting democracy in the Arab region would have a similar positive effect.

Democrats in the Arab world are also likely to be inclined to cooperate with external groups and organizations which are keen to foster democracy in this region. However, while this may strengthen the hand of Arab democrats, such cooperation may backfire if these external groups are associated with interests inimical to the welfare of the Arab region. One way of circumventing this is to promote cooperation with international organizations, thus avoiding possible suspicion of those in the Arab world who need to be won over to the idea of democracy. While the coordinated efforts of those who are interested in the democratization of the Arab world might not be sufficient to bring about the desired end—since, as mentioned earlier, this process depends on the interrelationship between internal and external, as well as subjective and objective factors, at least some of which may be beyond the human will—it should nevertheless be maintained that, as the saying goes, where

there is a will, there is a way. Thus, underestimating what determined and enlightened groups may achieve should be avoided.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY IN THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY**

*Claudia Kornahrens*

### **HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE 1990S**

Two anniversaries in 1993 in the field of human rights have provided a timely opportunity for a critical review in this important area. Forty-five years after the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and 25 years after the First World Conference on Human Rights, the realization of the codified human rights and fundamental freedoms remains elusive: civil wars and armed ethnic and religious conflicts are in progress all over the world. The number of refugees and displaced persons has grown dramatically in recent years. Extreme poverty and famine continue to exist. Practices such as arbitrary detention, torture, enforced disappearances and extrajudicial executions are still used to suppress people fighting for their rights and freedom. Nationalism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and religious intolerance constitute serious obstacles to the full enjoyment of human rights in different parts of the world. At the end of 1993, the Centre for Human Rights in Geneva announced more than 300,000 reported human rights violations (a number seven times higher than in the previous year).

With the end of the East-West conflict, international human rights policy has been freed from the ideological dispute which determined the course of international relations for decades. In 1989, the initial euphoria in Europe led to a strengthening of the CSCE process, to the Conference on the Human Dimension, and to the Charter of Paris proclaimed in November 1990 and based on three pillars: human rights, democracy and the rule of law. As a result of the re-evaluation and growing importance of human rights issues after the Cold War, the General Assembly of the United Nations finally decided, in December 1990, to hold a second World Conference on Human Rights in 1993.

### THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN VIENNA: USELESS GIANT MEETING OR MILESTONE?

The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights contains a series of recommendations for the major human rights problems—the rights of women have to be especially mentioned in this context—as well as for the strengthening of the instruments for protecting and promoting human rights. Although it is not binding under international law, it offers a political reference point. The achievements and the gaps in the document have to be judged in view of the fact that the Conference's machinery worked on the principle of consensus and not on majority decisions.

Considering the controversial preparatory process, the Conference achieved a substantial result by affirming that "all human rights are universal, indivisible and inter-dependent and interrelated . . . While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms" (paragraph 3 of the Declaration).

It should also be emphasized that economic, social and cultural rights have been integrated in the Vienna Declaration as indivisible and interlinked with civil and political rights. And, for the first time by

consensus, the right to development has been recognized as an inalienable right of the individual. Further, the Declaration recognizes the interdependence of democracy, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; it calls for special action to establish and strengthen democratic structures. Due to the fact that a number of States reject dialogue on human rights violations on the grounds that these questions touch upon their sovereignty and are exclusively internal affairs, as well as the fact that human rights violations have cross-border and international repercussions, the Declaration states that the promotion and protection of all human rights is a "legitimate concern of the international community" (paragraph 5).

Without doubt, the terrible war in former Yugoslavia with its immeasurable human rights violations created a stimulus for the realization of instruments that could ensure better global protection of human rights.

### COMMON PRINCIPLES IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY OF GERMANY

Article 1, paragraph 2 of the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany states, "The German people . . . acknowledge inviolable and inalienable human rights as the basis of every community, of peace and of justice in the world." On this basis there exists a traditional cross-party accord in the principles and objectives of German human rights policy. On the occasion of the annual human rights debate in the Federal Parliament, government and parliamentary groups in December 1993 unanimously reaffirmed their commitment to human rights issues as laid down in the Vienna Declaration. Despite different political programmes, a consensus exists on the great importance of human rights issues in the framework of international relations. The conviction is shared that human rights policy—and especially preventive concepts—contribute directly to peace. Increasingly, it is realized on all sides that human rights policy constitutes not only an element of classic foreign policy, but is also closely linked with other policy areas such as arms control, economic cooperation, foreign trade and domestic political issues.

### INSTRUMENTS AND NECESSITIES IN THE FRAMEWORK OF BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL GERMAN HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY

In general it can be stated that German human rights policy has become more and more tightly connected with the common policy of the European States. With the commencement of the European Union, established through the Maastricht Treaty on 1 November 1993, the member States are to follow a common foreign and security policy. Common policy does not only concern the coordination of activities in the regional systems or in the United Nations machinery; it also means, for example, common diplomatic protest by the European States in case of human rights violations in certain countries.

#### (a) Council of Europe and CSCE

The Council of Europe and the CSCE attach the greatest importance to the development of Central and Eastern Europe. One of the principal goals is to foster democratization. This includes another special problem: the rights of national, ethnic, religious and other minorities. As an element of the mechanisms making up the framework of the human dimension, the CSCE has established the position of a High Commissioner for National Minorities, whose task it is, by promoting dialogue and political solutions, to prevent the escalation of minority problems. For years the Council of Europe has intended to create a basis in international law for the protection of minorities by drawing up a special convention or an additional protocol to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. The efforts to codify the rights of minorities have not yet been successful, however, because serious problems exist in finding a comprehensive definition for the diverse minorities living in Europe. But the developments in former Yugoslavia and the other ethnic crises in Eastern Europe show the urgency of establishing an effective legal basis. Helping solve the problems associated with minorities' rights is one of the priorities of German human rights activities. Not only are the governments active in the CSCE and in the Council of Europe, but the national parliaments are

involved as well. They are represented in the parliamentary assemblies of both bodies.

High priority is also given to supporting the democratization process in Central and Eastern Europe. The Central and Eastern European countries which aspire to be admitted to the Council of Europe have to fulfil minimum requirements in human rights protection, democracy and the rule of law. Until they are admitted into membership—by ratifying the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms—there are intense preparatory consultations with the Council, including technical assistance. For example, the Demosthenes Programme has been set up by the Council to assist the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in carrying out their constitutional, legislative and administrative reforms. This programme involves practical cooperation in the form of expert meetings, workshops, training courses, scholarships and study visits. The federal government and the Federal Parliament are deeply involved in this process, which is supplemented by bilateral measures in the field of human rights policy and economic assistance. The dramatic failure of the Europeans to stop the war in Yugoslavia has reinforced the desire to create and strengthen preventive systems in Europe.

#### (b) United Nations

Simultaneously, high priority is also given to the United Nations human rights agencies. For years, there was a special German interest, with broad cross-party support, in the idea of a United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. This commitment was based on the conviction that the existing UN system was obviously insufficient for controlling the implementation of the standards set by international law and had to be adapted to current and future needs. After decades of discussion, the General Assembly in November 1993 decided to establish the position of High Commissioner for Human Rights. In cooperation with numerous other nations, a further goal of German efforts within the UN system is the creation of an international criminal court. The first step towards a jurisdiction of crimes against peace and against the security

of mankind has been taken through the establishment of the Tribunal for War Crimes in the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague. In addition, there is a consensus that the Centre for Human Rights in Geneva, equipped with programmes for advisory services and technical assistance, should assume a focal and coordinating role in the promotion of human rights within the UN machinery. These UN activities of the federal government are also strongly supported by the Federal Parliament, first and foremost through its Subcommittee for Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid, a body subordinate to the Foreign Affairs Committee. Members of the Subcommittee regularly attend the annual meeting of the Commission for Human Rights in Geneva, and they participated in the Vienna Conference as official members of the German delegation. It should be added that the tendency within the European Union to collaborate and speak with a common European voice is clearly evident in the framework of UN human rights work.

### (c) Bilateral action

Within the scope of bilateral action are two instruments available for pursuing human rights in a concrete way. First, development cooperation, financed by the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation, is given to the recipient countries according to certain criteria such as respect for human rights, participation of the people in the political decision-making process, the presence of a social- and market-oriented economic system and a government policy which supports sustainable development. The situation in a recipient country is analysed using such indicators as absence of torture, the standard of the judicial system, freedom of worship, protection of minorities, etc. However, this form of development cooperation does not represent a punitive system of action. Of course, publicly financed development assistance is stopped or reduced in the case of grave human rights violations. The tendency in a country to improve its human rights situation is also a decisive consideration. The amount and kind of assistance should reflect the efforts undertaken within the recipient country to respect human rights.

The second instrument is so-called democratization assistance, which was established as a special budget item of the Foreign Ministry in 1992. It aims to support in an impartial way the preparation for and carrying out of democratic elections in developing countries. However, in the past two years the budget included a very small commitment—in comparison with other expenditures such as military assistance. This is a grave shortcoming. A common goal should be the preventive protection of human rights, which would require considerably greater resources to finance specific programmes for countries who aspire to democracy, the rule of law and pluralism. There is a need for advisory services and technical assistance to realize constitutional, legislative and administrative reforms, to establish an independent jurisdiction, and, for example, to educate security forces.

An extremely important element of human rights policy is the public and diplomatic dialogue with other countries on general human rights issues or on current human rights violations. This dialogue is conducted not only by the federal government but also by members of the Parliament and especially by the above-mentioned Subcommittee for Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid. Special emphasis is given to categories of individuals such as political prisoners and to the exchange of information concerning, for example, cultural differences in the interpretation of human rights. In addition, political foundations, churches and non-governmental organizations arrange expert meetings or workshops on human rights questions in Germany and abroad. Official visits by members of the federal government to countries where human rights are severely violated receive a great deal of attention in the German media. Public discussions increase if these kinds of visits are connected to economic interests or the supply of arms, putting government policy under pressure of justification.

### NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: CONTRIBUTION TO INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS

Political work is accompanied by the activities of numerous non-governmental organizations in Germany where private individuals are

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involved on a voluntary basis. Their activities are more and more appreciated on the political level, as well as on an international level, as seen at the Vienna Conference. They call public attention to human rights violations and send appeals to the government and the Parliament. Besides written information or appeals, there are regular personal contacts within the field of policy. Further, they are invited to parliamentary hearings as experts and provide politicians with information, including lists of names of political prisoners, before they are due to visit certain countries. Appreciation for the activities of non-governmental organizations was a common theme in the human rights debate in the Federal Parliament in December 1993.

### **DOMESTIC CHALLENGES**

Serious human rights policy in the international arena requires credibility. Credible human rights work cannot exclude domestic issues. In Germany, incidents of racism, xenophobia and violence against foreigners have been increasing. However, there is a broad resistance and societal commitment against this. The disputes in Germany over the reform of the right of asylum and the status of refugees from civil wars are directly connected with these phenomena. While the difference between human rights violations initiated or tolerated by governments and the aggression of criminal members of a democratic society is clearly understood, these specific problems are becoming a theme in the political human rights debate in Germany.

## **CAUSES OF EXTREMISM**



## CAUSES OF RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES

*Ahmed Sudqi Dajani*

In this study on the causes of fundamentalism in the Arab countries, there is a need at the outset to define precisely the term *fundamentalism*, which the West uses to refer to the phenomenon of religious extremism. This is especially important, considering how the Western crisis managers discuss Islamic fundamentalism. Edward Said in his 1981 study *Covering Islam*, which looked at the media and at research and official statements, observed that this coverage is far from objective; it is full of racist cultural hatred, and is unjust, unbalanced and irresponsible. A decade after his study was published, the situation has only gotten worse, especially since the upheaval in the Gulf.

*Fundamentalism*, according to Webster's Dictionary, is a term that originated in the West and was used to describe the Protestant movement that appeared in the twentieth century and which emphasized the literal interpretation of the Bible as a basis of Christian life and education. The term was also used to refer to any movement that insisted on strict adherence to a given set of values and basic principles.

Fundamentalism in this sense is present today in many corners of the world and is inseparable from the more general and more widespread phenomenon of religious revival observable in many societies. Some

Western observers point out that religious revivalism appeared after the setbacks suffered by revolutionary and reform movements. The internal and external pressures surrounding these movements are what drive people to religion, which they consider the one absolute truth in a sea of surging doubts, as K.S. Staphreanous says in his book *World Asunder*; in religious revivalism, religion becomes a reference point, both for conserving the system and for overthrowing it. Staphreanous cited a Gallup poll conducted in the U.S. in 1976 which showed that 50 million American young people, or one third of the voting-age population, considered themselves to have been born again spiritually. From among this group appeared a large body of evangelicals who considered themselves saved from sin, who wanted to reform Protestantism and who enlisted the fundamentals of their belief in the Bible to fight "Godless communism." Fundamentalism is coloured by two elements; religious belief (which includes belief in the unseen), and a literal interpretation of and strict application of religious principles. Within the phenomenon of fundamentalism, one observes the presence of extremist thinking and of devotees that are willing to carry it out. If we turn our focus to the Arab countries, the religious revival of the fifteenth century of the hijra calendar (i.e., the present time) comes to mind. This revival has been termed an "awakening" and involves heightened feelings of loyalty to Islam on the part of Muslims, who see it as an all-encompassing system—of belief, of worship, of comportment, of how to treat others, of legislation—and who invite Muslims to live their Islam, to fully apply its timeless values and its ennobling decency and decorums, and use it as a reference point to tackle the issues of our age. This awakening has also occurred among Arab Christians, and is evident in increased dedication to upholding the spiritual values espoused by Christianity.

Such awakening serves to prepare the adherents (of whatever religion): it raises their own self-awareness, raises their profile with others, establishes a perception of the central issues of the age, and develops confidence in the ability to respond to whatever challenges must be faced to become free of dependency on others and to formulate the required will to act. It is also a renaissance aimed at the "renewal" of religion, in terms of how this is perceived by Muslims (i.e., it does not

involve adding anything to Islam); that is, God continues through the ages to provide people who will renew Muslims' commitment to their religion.

The writings that deal with this awakening make it clear that attempts from outside to achieve domination—whether that domination is economic, media, military, educational or political—are an effective factor in rousing energies to counteract them. The inability of "Westernization", which was carried on under the name of "modernization", to handle successfully the problems of contemporary life in the Arab countries, as well as in the rest of the Islamic world, was also effective in reviving religion and bringing about a religious awakening. Westernization implied cultural destruction at many different levels, beginning with eating and clothing, passing on to the economy and ending up with political rule. Governments that fell hostage to Westernization ended up externally dependent and internally isolated.

In the Arab countries, we find that extremism goes along with religious revival, which is an expanding phenomenon whose central feature is the excessiveness of the extremists in their religion and their strictness in applying its precepts, whereas the movement of religious revival is characterized by moderation among those associated with it. The truth is that if religious revival, in this cultural context, is to be an effective response, then religious extremism in this context is mostly a reaction, with reasons behind it, to be sure. We say "mostly", because religious extremism can sometimes be an effective response, considering that the tendency to extremism is one of the features of human social life, since it includes the youth.

The causes of religious extremism are varied. At this point I prefer to use the term *religious extremism* rather than *fundamentalism*, whose translation to Arabic does not denote its meaning in other languages. On the contrary, the Arabic translation of this latter term denotes a positive meaning. Some of the causes are inherent in human society and some are the outcome of certain factors, which may be internal or external. In either case the agents include political, socio-economic, cultural-intellectual and doctrinal elements.

In examining the factors that are inherent in human society we first focus on youths and their special characteristics. The proportion of youths in the Arab populations is high, accounting for about half the population. Among the characteristics of youths that were mentioned by Fakhr el-Din el-Razi, author of *Firass* (Insight), is rage. This means that fear is only a small part of their nature because fear and rage are incompatible. This may cause them to commit injustice in broad daylight even though it may bring disgrace and shame upon them. On the other hand, rage may cause them to become merciful if they are exposed to an individual's suffering from oppression. They may become aware of oppression on a large scale, filling them with even greater compassion than the older generations feel. This trait is connected with "an idealistic perception of human nature" and with "an inclination towards happiness, friendship and purity. This affection may cause them to seek pleasure and to be inclined towards frivolity and licentiousness, and it may cause them to seek knowledge." The Arab nation is considered to be young, with at least half of its people being below 25 years of age, and there is a latent tendency to extremism among its youth which only needs to be stimulated for it to become active. What, then, are the agents that may activate extremism in the Arab countries?

1. All studies on religious extremism in the Arab countries agree that one of its principal causes is the imperialist practices in the Arab countries and Zionist settlement in Palestine. Such practices constitute an external challenge to the Arab nation in general and to Arab youth in particular. These practices directly affect millions of Arabs living under Israeli occupation in Palestine, Southern Lebanon and the Golan in Syria and also have an impact upon the other Arabs in the various Arab countries. The most distinctive characteristic of these practices is their racist, aggressive character and their impact upon the various aspects of life, namely, the political, economic, social, intellectual-cultural and doctrinal aspects with regard to both Muslim and Christian Arabs. Reports on such practices have been documented by the United Nations, Amnesty International and other human rights organizations in different parts of the world. Looking at the trend of such practices since 1967 as well as the trend of the Israeli policies that govern them, it is noticeable

that these trends correspond with that of religious extremism. We saw how this extremism increased as a result of Israel's holding on to the Arab territories in the wake of the October war of 1973, and following "Land Day" in occupied Palestine in 1976 and the Israeli invasions of Lebanon in 1978 and 1982. We must not be surprised by any further increase in religious extremism following the aggressive Israeli military operation against Lebanon in the last week of July 1993. One can also observe that religious extremism intensified with the escalation of official and non-official Israeli terrorism against the resistance to the occupation. Such terrorism has been Israel's policy against the resistance since 1967 and against the intifada since 1987.

2. Another major factor that has fueled religious extremism in the Arab countries has been the policy of foreign hegemony in the region under the leadership of the United States of America. These policies, which perpetuate Israel's occupation of the Arab territories and overlook Israel's defiance of international legitimacy, prevent the United Nations from assuming its responsibilities in facing aggression. These policies adopt a double standard in dealing with the various issues at hand, arousing indignation and driving people to adopting extremist thinking and hence violence in confronting it. Looking at the trend of religious extremism in the Arab countries, one sees a relationship between its upward slope and the positions of the United States on the Arab-Zionist struggle and on other Arab issues. America's position on the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 was conducive to an increase in religious extremism. Such extremism surged when American naval units went to Beirut in 1983 and enforced the agreement of 17 May 1983 on Lebanon. The same was true of the American position during the Gulf war and its aftermath. America's engineering of the current process for settling the Arab-Zionist struggle, which started in Madrid on 30 October 1990, led to the escalation of tension in the region. This occurred as a result of Israel's escalation of terrorism, and the intensification of the resistance and the intifada in confronting such terrorism, leading in turn to the expansion of fanaticism. The impact of foreign policies of hegemony is not confined to the Arab-Zionist struggle but also includes the political, economic, social, intellectual-cultural and doctrinal aspects of life in the

various Arab countries. The policies of the International Monetary Fund that impose certain conditions on these countries are another significant factor in fueling extremism. Also, the media policies and Westernization that have been imposed upon those countries generate fanatical reactions. Such is the case with regard to intervention in the Arab countries' domestic policies.

3. The third major contributing factor to religious extremism in the Arab countries are the socio-economic changes that have taken place during the last two decades. These changes involved oil wealth which has undergone successive cycles of ebb and flow. They also involved economic policies that were shifted from State control to market forces. Educational and media policies were also affected by the socio-economic changes taking place. All this has intensified the migration from the countryside to the city, and squatter settlements have proliferated in the urban areas. Such socio-economic changes have caused the middle strata of society to suffer as a result of continual inflation. It is noticeable that squatter settlements have a large number of religious fanatics. This is due to the failure of some of their inhabitants to adjust to city values, which are different from rural values. It is also due to the widespread unemployment among the inhabitants of such areas, especially among the youth. They notice the sharp class differences between them and the extremely wealthy upper stratum. This stratum has either benefited from the economic opening or is deeply involved in corruption. It is likewise noticeable that a high proportion of those who rationalize fanaticism, as well as its intellectuals and perpetrators, belong to the middle class, which adheres to society's values and wants to preserve them. These changes have led to the movement of manpower in the Arab world to the oil States. This manpower has been subjected to various strong pressures that have driven some to religious fanaticism. Among such pressures are those caused by the laws that govern residence, work and movement from country to another. These laws are influenced by a narrow territorial outlook that completely ignores the notion of Arab citizenship that is deeply entrenched in every Arab. We thus find that religious fanaticism in such circumstances is a reaction to individual destitution.

4. The fourth major cause of fanaticism is domestic and has a great impact in this respect. It is the absence of democracy in the Arab countries despite the passing of several decades since the establishment of the model of a modern State in them. Both domestic and foreign factors together account for this cause. It equally afflicts governments and peoples with the disease of "deprivation" which Dr. Mohammed Kamel Hussein discusses in his book *Al-Wadi al-Muqaddas* (The Sacred Valley). This affliction causes the countries that suffer from it to contract the disease "lack of security". Consequently, these countries suffer in turn from institutional violence coupled with complete inability to communicate with youths. These youths thus have no opportunity to express themselves or serve their countries. Many youths thus fall prey to institutional violence, and consequently religious fanaticism grows in their midst. It is observed that such institutional violence grows out of the total failure of these systems of government to achieve their declared objectives of economic development and political pluralism. This violence increases as these States fall captive to dependency and indebtedness as a result of the policies of global hegemony of the superpowers.

Knowing the causes of religious extremism in the Arab countries enables us to deal with this phenomenon objectively and to deflect the propaganda generated by negative media coverage. It also helps us understand how to deal with the negative aspects of it and to utilize what is positive, as well as to become proficient in dealing with young people, so as to develop their energies and potential, instead of allowing these to be squandered.

## UNIFIED GERMANY AND RIGHT-WING POLITICAL EXTREMISM

*Shirin Hildegard Fathi*

In 1992, the Federal Bureau for the Protection of the Constitution registered 2,285 violent acts committed by politically motivated persons of the far right, a 54 percent increase as compared to 1991. Ninety percent of the registered attacks were directed against foreigners, mostly people seeking political asylum in the Federal Republic. Only 2 percent of interrogated suspects were more than 30 years of age. In 1993, 83 parties and associations on the extreme right were known to exist, with an estimated total membership of 70,000 people. In addition, it is assumed that 200 militant neo-Nazis and around 5,000 radical skinheads operate outside any formal party structure. A total of 30 publishers and about 80 periodicals cater to Fascist purposes, with an estimated total edition of over 10 million in 1992.<sup>1</sup>

These are only a few statistical data to illustrate the extent of right-wing extremist activity in contemporary Germany. The neo-Nazi movement, the new right-wing anti-Semitism, neo-Fascism—these are catchwords that are increasingly occupying the media worldwide. And the

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<sup>1</sup> This statistical information was compiled from selected articles in *Der Spiegel*, F. Hundseder, *Stichwort Rechtsextremismus* (Munich: W. Heyne Verlag, 1993) and M. Leier, ed., *Unheil über Deutschland* (Hamburg: Gruner + Jahr AG, 1993).

names of Hoyerswerda, Hünxe, Rostock, Mölln and Solingen—infamous for the horrid associations and threatening implications connected with the new Germany—are on the verge of being better known internationally than Berlin, Frankfurt and Heidelberg.

However, there is little that is new about the neo-Nazis, and they are not a phenomenon unique to Germany. The worldwide defeat of communism justifies the often-asked question: "What's left?" Consequently, any existing extremist potential has only one venue open, the right. In 1992, the right-wingers in France's election achieved a margin of 13.9 percent, in the latest election in Italy 14.2 percent of the electorate voted arch-conservative, in Austria this percentage goes up to 16.6 percent and the recent elections in Russia speak for themselves. Compared to this European-wide drift to the right, the extent of right-wing extremism expressed in numbers and percentages seems relatively insignificant in the Federal Republic.<sup>2</sup> However, two interrelated factors make the German case special: its past, and the fact that unification provided an impetus to the neo-Fascist movement, greatly accelerating it.

As was mentioned before, right-wing extremism is not new; even after the end of the Second World War it persisted among some incorrigible hard-liners. However, it was not discussed openly, and the media tried to ignore it, just as the majority of Germans tried to ignore their modern history. Some critics nowadays even maintain that it was precisely this attitude—the creation of a taboo—that provided a discontented youth with the most provocative of tools with which to voice their protest. Just as Franz-Josef Strauss maintained in 1986 that it was time for Germany to step out from under the shadow of the Third Reich in order to rehabilitate its underdog position internationally, far-right ideologies provided the right punch for segments of society who view their position as underdogs and social outcasts. Although some of this may help explain the phenomenon of resurgent Fascism—and although it is certainly true that Germany's Nazi past remains a reference point for

<sup>2</sup> The parties of the extreme right failed to move into the Bundestag in the last nationwide elections in 1990, when they were able to garner only 2.4 percent of the votes.

its underclass as well as for its liberal politicians, often warping the attitudes of both—right-wing extremism is too complex a problem to have one simple answer. Rather, the answer is a composite of various interactive factors. Most obvious is the economic aspect: unification did cause serious problems for the German economy. The strain of having to absorb an additional 16 million people has been felt everywhere. Housing shortages, unemployment and falling incomes are the immediate and visible first results of unification.

The mistakes committed in the course of this process are now making themselves felt. The industrial core of the former GDR is eroded, the antiquated factories are closed, the once model-socialist industrial cities have been hardest hit and there is a marked population drain westwards. In that sense, East and West are not growing organically together—which was the wish of Willy Brandt—but in an abrupt and overwhelming way the West has taken possession of the East. One can almost speak of colonization; 75 percent of the industry of the former GDR has been abolished, just as everything it stood for has been declared null and void.

It is not surprising then, if the population of the eastern part of Germany feels an acute void. These are people who grew up in or spent most of their lives in a system built upon false postulates, where living standards were low, corruption and repression were rampant, personal freedoms almost non-existent. But the one thing they did have was a job. The job was the foremost symbol of identification in a society that preached the value of labour above all else. The hopes of the East Germans after unification were not only for stable jobs and better living standards; there was also a desire to be proud of being German after decades of being half-Russian. None of these hopes seem to be coming true in the short run. The costs of unification have not even been computed yet, and the rift between East and West Germans is deeper than imagined. The prevailing feeling is one of being deceived by the government, of an acute loss of identity and of dashed hopes.

This situation provides fertile ground for right-wing activists and xenophobia. The disregard East and West Germans feel for each other is transferred—because it is morally impermissible and politically incorrect—and projected upon foreigners.<sup>3</sup> In almost any society under stress, foreigners and minorities are liable to be made scapegoats by unscrupulous politicians and social misfits. Immigration becomes a factor when it overstates a society's powers of absorption. The helplessness, disorientation and fear that is felt in regard to one's own situation translates into a defensive position and a potential for aggression that is directed against foreigners. It is interesting to note that there is no difference between East and West where xenophobia is concerned. One might even venture to say that it is more pronounced in the East due to more infrequent interaction with foreigners. The State-directed internationalism with its doctrines of socialist solidarities only concealed and suppressed the lingering xenophobia.

In this context of fear and deceit, far-right ideologies provide the easiest frame of reference. They appeal to the lowest human instincts—*us* versus *them*—and they have ready-made, easy to apply, black and white explanations and a coherent and closed world view. Neo-Fascists seem attractive because they offer seemingly easy answers to very complex social problems and frustrations. In addition, they fulfill the longing for identity by providing “eternal values” such as pride in being German, in belonging to a powerful and authoritarian State that is based upon ethnic purity. It is often observed that where social networks become less stable—or fail, as has been the case in the former GDR—then there is a return to “natural” categories, distinctions based on colour and race, in other words, racism.

There is an inherent aversion in Germany to the word *racism*. Yet it is impossible to speak of Fascism without reference to racism. Some authors even maintain that “popular racism derives its sanction and its sustenance from State racism and that, in our time, the seed-bed of

<sup>3</sup> See C. Leggewie, *Druck von Rechts* (Munich: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1993) for an elaboration of this argument.

Fascism is racism . . . [whereby] an institutionalized system of discrimination was there from the beginning, either written into the Constitution itself and/or anchored in legislation relating to foreigners, [creating] . . . a whole popular culture of xenophobia.”<sup>4</sup>

There is evidence that supports this assertion and that leaves no doubt that politicians and the media have helped to create popular racism and to breathe it into the popular culture. The debates about the right of asylum were in the first place misused by the media and by unscrupulous politicians in need of explaining their own inabilities. But in addition, the official attempts to appease the rightist mob only served to incite it more. By officially blaming increased immigration for the nation's ills, by publicly allowing the debate to take this course of scapegoatism, the pent-up aggressions and frustrations were directed and sanctioned by the State. There is evidence that after each public debate about asylum, the number of arson attacks against foreigners and asylum seekers increased. And most frightening of all was the official reaction of the regional government in Hoyerswerda. Instead of protecting the asylum hostels against right-wing mob and arresting the arsonists, they removed the victims to refugee camps, thus granting the mob its victory. Hoyerswerda, to this day, is *ausländerfrei* (free of foreigners).

Going right does not have so much to do with ideological appeal as with the loss of credibility of the old established parties. And as the electorate drifts right, the parties attempt to catch up with the electorate by going even more right. The prime example is the November 1992 revision of Article 16,<sup>5</sup> rescinding the automatic right to asylum for citizens of countries with no official record of human rights abuses. The fact that even the Social Democratic Party (SPD) of Germany bent over backwards to vote for this revision indicates a lack of ideas and an

<sup>4</sup> A. Sivanandan, “Racism: the road from Germany”, *Race and Class*, vol. 34, No. 3 (January-March 1993), p. 69.

<sup>5</sup> Reference is to Article 16 of the 1949 Constitution that aimed to rehabilitate the country by declaring that anyone persecuted elsewhere should have the right of asylum.

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inability on the part of the established parties to deal with the given situation.

Overall, official government attitudes towards resurgent Fascism have been ambiguous and have given rise to the impression that the State lacks the will to confront this danger with the necessary firmness and strength. Initially, the State even seemed reluctant to recognize the arson attacks as organized criminal acts. The official attitude preferred the viewpoint that these are isolated acts by frustrated kids—a type of “juvenile prank.” Only the increasing wave of xenophobic violence—and the fear of Germany’s tarnished image abroad—forced the government into taking the rightist threat more seriously and into realizing that the culprits are not isolated and misguided individuals, but that there is a well-organized network of right-wing parties and associations.

As a matter of fact, it is difficult to pinpoint who exactly composes the right wing. Apart from the visible activists—mostly young, frustrated and unorganized aggressors—there is a well-organized network of financiers and ideologues who operate under a cloak of respectability. In addition, there is a silent majority that stands apart, secretly or openly applauding the arson attacks and providing a potential reservoir of active supporters. In view of this constellation, the question is whether the banning of neo-Nazi parties is effective or not. Just as media coverage of arson attacks confirm the violent youth and corroborate their self-confidence, official prohibitions may radicalize the movement and prompt the various splinter groups to unite, making them more effective.

More sensible seems to be the recent debate within Germany to treat the causes as opposed to the effects. Xenophobia is a symptom, and one cannot push it back by forcing all asylum seekers to leave the country, just as Fascism and racism will not disappear through demonstrations of goodwill by the millions of Germans who are appalled by the recent developments in their country. The new Germany must finally come to terms with its history. It needs to move forward towards a redefinition of itself as a community held together by citizenship, not race. Ethnicity is not a sound base for Statehood. The need to change

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Article 16 of the Constitution, to apply *jus soli* instead of *jus sanguinis* is much more than a mere technicality. It redefines the principle of collective identity, and it will allow the much needed change of topic—away from the debate on asylum and towards the necessary concept of a self-confident nation State, comfortable with its history and its national identity within a European confederation.



**ENVIRONMENTAL  
EXPERIENCES  
AND POLICIES**

## **THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE UAE: THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE**

*Hemaid el-Katami*

### **INTRODUCTION**

An ever-growing amount of attention is being given to the environment at the national, regional and international levels alike, in view of common geographic, climatic and atmospheric factors and the common space, waters and open land masses which tie the various parts of the world together.

This growing attention also arises from the challenges of having to confront environmental pollution, as well as the depletion of existing, new and renewable water resources.

These challenges call for confrontation that is based on modern scientific and legal premises, taking into account the need for development and social awakening. The process of development as a whole must be constructive rather than destructive, for the environment is an inheritance passed on to our fathers from our forefathers, and it must be preserved and developed in a manner which ensures that our posterity will continue to progress and develop in a clean, safe and pollution-free environment.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERIENCES AND POLICIES**

Faced with the intricacy and wide diversity of environmental concerns, which require that all those who hold responsible positions do their part to protect the environment, the UAE leadership has added new dimensions by introducing various frameworks and institutions specializing in environmental preservation. This represents a step towards realizing social and institutional solidarity for a safe and clean environment.

### **THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCIES IN THE UAE**

Since the 1970s, various public and quasi-public agencies and bodies have been set up in the UAE to deal with environmental concerns. Some are specialized in the problems of desertification and holding back the encroaching desert, some are concerned with water resources and their development, and others deal with marine pollution prevention and the monitoring and control of air pollution. These agencies and bodies may be classified as follows:

#### **A. LOCAL AGENCIES AND BODIES**

##### **1. The Private Department of His Excellency the President**

The main accomplishments of this Department, in environmental protection and preservation, are stated below:

(a) Expansion of the green areas in Abu Dhabi and its possessions, and protecting them from desertification by increasing the number of palm trees in the UAE to 18 million trees, and by planting 200,000 hectares with 80 million trees extending to the borders of the Empty Quarter, which is considered the most arid place on earth.

(b) The establishment of natural reserves for protecting flora and fauna. The most important of these reserves is Seer Bani Yas Island, where 35,000 head of wild desert animals roam freely, including deer, elk and gazelle, together with giraffes and ostriches. Around the Island, there

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are also falcons, ducks and geese, and numerous species of rare endemic and migratory birds, as well as other birds imported from various parts of the world, which have adapted to life in the local environment. Recently, a new project for breeding bustards was launched on the Island.

(c) Growing the mangrove tree in increasing numbers, in view of its many beneficial attributes as an excellent source of nutrition for marine animals, as a source of natural beauty and a factor in protecting the coastline against erosion, and as a haven for small fish and other marine life.

Ultimately, the efforts of this Department serve the objective of maintaining the ecological balance in the UAE and at the regional and international levels, in accordance with the Agreement on Biological Diversity, which was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

#### **2. The Department of Agriculture and Livestock, Al-Ain**

In 1967, this Department launched the process of reclaiming 17,000 square metres of desert area into arable land, as part of a plan to protect the environment and combat desertification. By 1990-1991, the reclaimed area had reached 151,000 square metres. The Department has also planted a belt of trees along 55 kilometres of the Al-Ain/Abu Dhabi highway, and has forested an area of 215,000 square metres along the same highway. The Department provides support and encouragement to farmers for planting forests in the desert and has planted pastoral shrubs to fix the soil and prevent erosion. Regarding insect and pest control, the Department has developed safer alternatives to the use of harmful and poisonous insecticides which may pollute agricultural products and pose dangers for the environment and for humans.

#### **3. Abu Dhabi Municipality (ADM)**

Based on a firm belief in the importance of protecting and preserving the local environment, which is the vital space for humans, ADM

has set up a Centre for Control of Foodstuffs and the Environment. This Centre periodically monitors chemical pollution in the atmosphere and solid pollutants in residential and semi-industrial areas, as well as radioactive pollution in the air. The Centre uses a rapid telecommunications network which covers the entire UAE.

The Centre also monitors the pollution of foodstuffs by insecticide and fertilizer residues, as well as heavy and toxic substances produced by fungi and other micro-organisms. In addition, there is a programme for periodic measurement of various radioactive pollutants in foodstuffs.

For some time now, ADM has carried out a recycling programme for non-hazardous solid waste, whereby approximately 1,200 tons are collected every day and 200 tons of organic fertilizer are produced daily. There is currently a plan to expand activities in this area. As for hazardous waste, there are special safe and scientifically designed underground burial sites, situated away from residential areas. Consideration is now being given to the construction of sophisticated incinerators for the safe disposal of such waste. Also, ADM has launched a project for liquid waste management, which involves the treatment of 30 million gallons of sewage for use in agriculture and the expansion of green areas.

#### 4. Dubai Municipality (DM)

With the rapid increase in industrial activity and development in the Emirate of Dubai, and in recognition of the attendant threats to the environment, DM issued an administrative order in 1991 with respect to the following:

- (a) Regulations for liquid waste disposal in the sea;
- (b) Regulations for monitoring air pollution arising from fixed sources;
- (c) Regulations for occupational health and safety;
- (d) Regulations for noise control;
- (e) Regulations governing natural reserve areas.

The Department of Environmental Protection and Safety of DM carries out the various activities related to monitoring pollution and measuring concentrations of environmental pollutants. This Department also follows up on local rulings concerned with reversing damages caused by environmental infractions.

#### 5. Al-Ain Municipality

This Municipality has various activities and projects aimed at protecting the environment, including the following main projects:

- (a) A project for waste collection, treatment and disposal, which involves setting up modern incinerators to deal with harmful emissions, as well as burial sites for various types of wastes that require sophisticated and safe burial in order to avoid environmental pollution.
- (b) A project for sewage treatment which aims at protecting public health and preventing environmental pollution through solid and liquid waste disposal while at the same time providing fertilizer and irrigation water for agriculture and afforestation.

#### 6. Abu Dhabi Department of Urban Planning

This Department has been negotiating since 1978 with a specialized firm for the preparation of a comprehensive framework for protecting the local environment, before launching its development plan. The Department has focused on a number of environmental problems, such as the following:

- (a) The Umm An-Nar Refinery and the air pollution resulting from its emissions.
- (b) The cement plant in Al-Ain and the residues and dust emitted from its smokestacks.

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(c) The need to dispose of solid waste and refuse, and the subsequent construction of the fertilizer plants in Abu Dhabi and Al-Ain.

(d) The need to conform to international standards for water desalination, and the emphasis on generating electric power using steam turbines instead of gas-powered turbines.

### **7. Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC)**

ADNOC has shown real concern for environmental preservation and protection from the pollution caused by the petroleum industry; it has participated in spreading environmental awareness, in monitoring water and air pollutants, and in setting up centres for the prevention of oil pollution, the most important of which are situated in Al-Ruwais, Umm An-Nar, Das Island and Mayraz. ADNOC also holds training programmes for its employees on the proper methods of using pollution protection equipment, and it undertakes thorough environmental assessments of all projects before implementation.

### **8. Al-Fujairah Port Authority**

In its efforts to protect the marine environment against pollution, this Authority is representative of all the port authorities in the UAE and the Jebel Ali Free Zone. Situated on the east coast, this Authority has dealt with the disposal of liquid and solid pollutants by ships passing, docking and waiting to dock, which pose a threat not only to the sea water but also to the shores and sand beaches, adversely affecting tourism in these areas. The Authority has taken the following measures:

(a) Deployment of speed boats for the surveillance and control of ships waiting to dock;

(b) Performing a daily count of waiting ships and conveying to shipping agents the instructions and regulations that ensure proper surveillance of waiting ships, such as the need to report ships' arrival in

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advance and to provide such information as the ship's name, type, captain's name, expected arrival time, last port of call and so on;

(c) Expanding the area set for the loading, unloading and handling of petroleum products, to keep up with the increasing number of ships calling;

(d) Setting up mechanisms for cooperation among marine agents, ship captains and the Authority, in the inspection and reporting of any spills in the waiting area;

(e) Establishing a special zone for the transport of gas between ships;

(f) Introducing special forms for all matters related to pollution;

(g) Imposing penalties on ships committing offences such as loading or unloading oil outside the special waiting area.

The Port Authority cooperates and coordinates with various environmental departments and agencies, including the Federal Agency for the Environment.

## **B. FEDERAL AGENCIES AND BODIES**

### **1. Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries**

This Ministry's contribution to environmental protection has consisted of introducing laws to regulate and limit the use of insecticides, fungicides and bactericides, in view of the hazards they pose to human health and to the environment. In addition, the Ministry has taken measures for rationalizing the use of water for agricultural irrigation, such as:

(a) Setting up a Higher Authority for Water;

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- (b) Constructing dams for holding rainwater;
- (c) Encouraging farmers to use modern irrigation systems, resulting in savings of 50-70 percent in water use;
- (d) Setting up flood observation and monitoring systems and undertaking projects for maintaining irrigation canals;
- (e) Soil enrichment, improvement and salination prevention.

The Ministry also oversees fisheries and monitors this nutritional reserve. It is responsible for formulating regulations to protect and prevent the depletion of this vital resource. The Centre for Fisheries Research plays an important role in this regard.

### 2. Ministry of Water and Electricity

This Ministry is concerned with the pollution of water resources through leakage of sewage water, liquid and solid waste, insecticides and fertilizers. It is also concerned with the sharp decline in subterranean water levels, and the open flow between sea water and subterranean water in coastal areas.

Furthermore, the Ministry is concerned with the consequences of water resources projects and their harmful side effects on humans and the environment. The Ministry has taken several measures such as carrying out regular, comprehensive assessments of the environmental consequences of water resources projects, and the inclusion of these assessments as an integral part of the Ministry's reports on water resources development. The Ministry also encourages ongoing research and measurement of the environmental effects of its projects.

In addition, the Ministry examines the subterranean water supply before and during use, to ensure its compliance with international health standards. The Ministry has also dealt with the environmental problems resulting from the progressive drop in the water level of subterranean

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reservoirs, and has constructed dams for replenishing these reservoirs with fresh water. Moreover, in collaboration with the Abu Dhabi and Dubai water resources departments, the Ministry has set up numerous desalination plants to close the shortfall in the water supply. In this respect the Ministry has been concerned with the quality of the sea water used in the distillation process, and with finding appropriate means for limiting emissions from fuel combustion, as well as with the continual monitoring of air pollutants.

### 3. Emirates' University

The University's role involves:

- (a) Carrying out research and studies on various environmental issues, through the Centre for Desert and Marine Ecology Research;
- (b) The preparation of specialized personnel who would be capable of understanding and developing insights into environmental issues, both locally and globally. This is provided by the Master's Programme in Environmental Studies, and through related projects which focus on man's relationship with the surrounding environment.

### 4. The Higher Commission on the Environment

This Commission was formed in 1981 by a Council of Ministers' decree which set forth the structure and mandate of the Commission. In 1983, another decree established a Follow-Up Committee, with representation from the Ministry of the Interior, the Border Guard, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Secretariat-General of Municipalities, Emirates' University, and the Ministry of Health.

Although its Director-General has been nominated, this Commission is still in the early stages. However, it has already commenced preparations for drafting environmental legislation, and has retained the services of an American consulting firm for this purpose.

### 5. The Friends of the Environment Society

This Society was established through a decree of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs on 14 November 1991, and its objectives were specified as follows:

- (a) Safeguarding and preserving the environment, for the well-being of humanity;
- (b) Raising the level of environmental awareness in the UAE;
- (c) Spreading recognition of existing threats to the environment and ways of preserving it;
- (d) Identifying the problems facing the UAE environment and developing appropriate solutions to these problems;
- (e) Pursuing the formulation of legislation for environmental protection with the appropriate authorities.

Through numerous activities and volunteer work, the Society has contributed to raising the level of environmental awareness within the various social strata in the UAE. Continuing along this course, the Society has expanded its activities and formed three committees:

- (a) The Environmental Awareness Committee
- (b) The Research and Studies Committee
- (c) The Animal Protection Committee

The Society publishes a weekly page in the newspaper *Al-Ittihad*, and utilizes various other media to help spread environmental awareness, through exhibitions and carnivals in public parks around the UAE, and by holding lectures, symposiums and cultural forums every year. In this endeavour, the Society seeks to attract all those concerned with environmental issues and those who are willing to participate as

volunteers. In addition, the Society cooperates with various official and community bodies concerned with attaining a clean and safe environment.

### ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES FACING THE UAE

The following are major environmental challenges which confront the UAE:

#### 1. The quality and quantity of water resources

The horizontal expansion of agriculture, construction and industry has caused an increase in water consumption in a country with limited hydrological resources, as it has no rivers and must depend on two major water sources: sea water (the Arabian Gulf) and subterranean water (wells).

This increase in consumption has caused some wells to go dry, and calls for increasing the capacity of desalination plants. However, this cannot cover all the demand for water in the household, agricultural, industrial and tourism sectors. Also, the desalination process is very costly, with the cost per gallon far exceeding the price paid by the consumer. The Government absorbs a large part of this differential by subsidizing water price rates so as to make water affordable to broad segments of the UAE population (nationals and expatriates), and to support minimal prices for various sectors of the economy. This itself may be a cause of excessive water consumption by many, who may have no regard for the need to rationalize their consumption, despite the fact that water—this source of life—is a finite, depletable resource. Although there are rules in place which regulate water consumption in the agricultural and household sectors, there are many who do not heed them. As a result, many wells have dried up, leading to deterioration of the soil and to drought in farming areas.

### 2. Marine pollution

As mentioned earlier, several seaports, coastal areas and lagoons are badly polluted as a result of solid and liquid waste disposal by ships. The existence of laws and other legal instruments are not in themselves adequate for reversing this serious environmental threat. Although the sea provides a territorial extension to a coastal nation, some disasters to the marine environment have resulted from destructive actions by the shipping and petroleum industries outside UAE territorial waters. The recent Gulf war is a case in point, with the marine pollution in Kuwait during the liberation campaign causing an ecological catastrophe which affected areas as far away as the east coast of the UAE.

### 3. Lack of environmental awareness

The demographic mix and diversity of the UAE population requires addressing various segments in different languages and at different educational levels, which makes the creation of awareness costly and difficult. Despite all the efforts made, the results have been inadequate, and there are segments of UAE society which have only a limited understanding of the environment and are unable to see the links that connect the different parts of the environment. For example, they may observe cleanliness in their immediate environment while at the same time destroying other parts of the environment through various activities arising from progress, modernity and economic growth. Examples include excessive consumption, depletion of natural wealth, the destruction of vegetation and greenery in favour of urban spread, or the increase in the number of transport vehicles, often beyond the present capacity of roads and highways.

## REMEDIES

The foregoing are only a few of a large number of challenges, most of which cannot be discussed here due to space constraints. They are examples of the broader, more general challenges. However, there are other problems which affect one Emirate but not another, or one segment

of society but not the others. On the whole, these challenges call for the following remedies:

1. Increasing the effectiveness of environmental agencies and bodies through material, moral and legal support.
2. Developing environmental laws, rules and regulations in a manner compatible with the evolution of society.
3. Increasing the effectiveness of the media (print and broadcast) in the environmental awareness process.
4. Introducing environmental education as a core subject at various levels in school curricula.
5. Enhancing cooperation and coordination amongst environmental bodies and authorities in assessing environmental laws and submitting reports thereon.
6. Conducting environmental surveys and studies which use scientific methodology, and drawing environmental maps and charts of the UAE.
7. Setting up an environmental data bank connected to all the agencies and bodies concerned with the environment, to compile and provide data on environmental conditions.
8. Enhancing the effectiveness of community organizations, particularly the Friends of the Environment Society, and providing assistance and support to this Society, which operates on a voluntary, humanitarian basis and saves a large amount of money which would otherwise have to be spent by the State to monitor and deal with environmental challenges.



9. Formulating means of cooperation between environmental agencies and bodies in the UAE and their counterparts at the regional and international levels, to exchange expertise and information, and to monitor environmental conditions.

## **ASPECTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY: EXPERIENCES IN THE FRG**

*Elmar Römpezyk*

### **THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY: THE STRUCTURE OF MODERN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

Ecological security can never be absolutely guaranteed, since there are no guarantees for protection from ecological hazards. Therefore, precise safety standards are very important on the one hand, and on the other the individual (the citizen, the businessman) must show at least a minimum of social responsibility and ethical conduct.

Such a standard of safety can presumably only be obtained through a "horizontal dialogue" among politicians, scientists, government representatives, employers and union representatives, and members of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) organized by concerned citizens. The areas of responsibility must be clearly defined to ensure the success of this exchange of ideas. Entrepreneurs as a group would undoubtedly carry a large part of the responsibility in such dialogue, since they are responsible for the biggest sources of environmental pollution. At the same time, more than any other group, they have the technical and financial means, as well as knowledge gained through research, needed to avoid damage to the environment.

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The second important accountable participant in this dialogue is the **State**, in this case, the **legislative** and the **executive** branches of government. The government must develop incentives and guidelines for its economic community and take a clear stand on definite political goals (independent of party politics).

Motivation and the need or demand for information, combined with a willingness to act, must be encouraged and developed within **unions** and nonpartisan **citizens' organizations**. The development of technical resources only makes sense if it is propagated and supported by active special-interest groups like these.

An ecologically-oriented market economy, a combination of modern entrepreneurs, and a politically far-sighted approach on the part of lawmakers and dedicated citizens groups is not only possible but is urgently needed. This mixture can be observed in practice in Europe and several countries in Latin America and Asia.

The burden of environmental policy must be shouldered by the majority. It is these clearly identifiable actors on the stage of society upon whom the development of a feasible environmental policy depends.

### ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IN GERMANY

The quality of the environment is a public good. The development of methods of environmental protection, environmentally favourable products, environmentally safe methods of production, etc., is a process which takes place in the open market, however slowly and erratically. For example, the urgent need for a drastic reduction in the use of energy in order to slow the pace of global warming makes a clear stand on the part of the State necessary. A current example is the ruling by the German government stating that all used packaging material must be returned to the manufacturer and may only be produced from environmentally safe materials. This ruling was made around the middle

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of 1991 and was put into practice by industry as of December 1991.<sup>1</sup> This followed a long debate involving the federal government and industry, and numerous citizens' campaigns against the flood of paper and plastic found in every supermarket.

However, a successful policy of refuse reduction is not something which can be carried out by a single country alone—international cooperation in this field is essential. In reality, countries have not progressed beyond the status quo of collecting and rearranging resolutions adopted since the first United Nations Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm in 1972. In particular, the governments of the developed, industrial countries have not lived up to their role as promoters of a far-sighted policy of environmental protection. The environmental balance in the former socialist industrial countries, which by the beginning of the 1990s became an issue that could no longer be avoided, is extremely depressing and in many cases is much worse than in many countries of the so-called third world.

### GOALS OF GERMAN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

The Federal Republic of Germany is a federal system with three clearly defined areas of responsibility for public administration. They are the following: the federal government, with all the subdivisions of its individual ministries; the State governments, which at present total 16, with their administrative substructure of departments or agencies; and the different forms of municipal administrations in southern and northern Germany. All three levels of government have their own areas of responsibility, budgets, and political apparatus within the framework of the German law laid down by Parliament.

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that currently in Germany this packaging law is being replaced, particularly by the so-called Dual System Germany. In this case, the manufacturer can buy the right to have his packaging material re-collected by a privately owned garbage disposal system. He is then allowed to label his packaging materials with the "Green Point". In fact, however, such packaging materials are rarely re-collected, since this would involve a major expense for manufacturers, and as a result, there is virtually no reduction in the amount of packaging material consumed.

## ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERIENCES AND POLICIES

The theme of environmental protection was included in the German government's programme for the first time in 1969. This action was inspired by the decision of the United Nations to make preparations, between 1968 and 1972, for the first global conference on the environment. The fact that the USA had already laid the groundwork for a national environmental policy was encouraging as well. It was also accelerated by the fact that the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) was in power at the time.

So far, the basic principals of this environmental protection programme have proven to be applicable and reliable. This programme is based on the fundamental belief that environmental protection is not only an ethical matter but also makes good economic sense and in addition, is necessary in order to guarantee a basic standard of living. Within German environmental politics there is a difference between substantial, tangible goals and instrumental goals. Tangible goals include the following:

### Quality of environment

- Preservation of healthy forests
- Preservation of the natural ability of bodies of water to rejuvenate themselves
- Attaining a certain quality of drinking water
- Minimum creation of waste during the transformation of sources of primary energy into forms for commercial use

### Emissions

- Establishment of tolerable levels of dust, exhaust gases, wastewater, noise and radiation

### Resources

- Conservation of sources of primary energy
- Utilization of heat produced by industrial processes

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- Improved techniques of recycling
- Concepts to avoid the production of waste

### Production

- Production of cars with reduced exhaust emissions
- Lead-free gasoline
- Glass bottles instead of plastic
- Asbestos-free construction material
- Spray cans and styrofoam produced without FCCs, etc.

### Consumption

- Development of environmental awareness through mass media education
- Tax incentives on environmentally friendly products
- Investment assistance if environmentally friendly products are used

In addition there are the three major principles on which German environmental policy is based: prevention, cooperation, and the polluter-pays principle.

### PREVENTION

Preventive environmental policy means much more than providing for protection against eventual dangers and the elimination of existing damages. It means that all decisions must be appraised from the point of view of their possible effects on the environment. Even from an economic point of view, preventive measures are of primary importance since in all instances they have proven to be less costly than clean-up after pollution has occurred.

However, the actual situation in Germany has shown that the application of this principle has been more than difficult. Up until now the percentage of investment in preventive measures—all fields

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included—has not exceeded an average of 20-25 percent of all publicized investments in ecological protection.

### COOPERATION

This principle calls for the participation of the general public at a very early stage in the formulation of government environmental policy and environmental feasibility studies. In this case a horizontal dialogue is called for between representatives of NGOs organized by the general public, representatives of religious groups, labour unions, organized business, political parties and the appropriate governmental committees from Parliament, the government and its departments. These talks should be carried out at all levels of government (federal, State, municipal).

### POLLUTER-PAYS PRINCIPLE (PPP)

Any costs arising from methods used to avoid damage to and the elimination of damage already done to the environment must be borne by those who cause it. In this way, damage done to the "public good"—in other words to the land, water, air, flora and fauna—will not be a burden on society as a whole in the form of external costs.

The standard case is the problem of refuse and sewage. In the rich industrial countries as well as the poorer countries of the third world there is a lack of well-maintained refuse dumps, and also there are not enough waste treatment plants to treat wastewater from cities and industries. The result is the usual illegal or wild dumping and the channelling of untreated wastewater into rivers, lakes and oceans, which in turn poisons the drinking water. New wells are drilled by the government or the community and are financed by general increases in taxes. The individual manufacturer who has directly contributed to the pollution of the water with his chemical waste is only burdened by these general tax increases. His private and company profits made through this mode of behaviour are not at risk. The polluter pays principle has been designed to combat this situation.

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According to this concept, the polluter should be responsible for all costs arising from things such as:

- Waste disposal, for chemical and radioactive waste in particular, with the exception of hospital waste;
- Reduction of emissions;
- Recultivation of the land in mining areas and reforestation of areas used for commercial lumbering;
- Services provided by wastewater treatment plants.

The government agencies in charge must have authority and be in a position to identify those responsible for pollution, initiate studies on the effects of pollutants, make realistic assessments of damage already done and enforce any number of drastic measures to control and punish offenders. This is necessary so that the principle of cause and effect, which is basically acknowledged by society as a whole, can be effectively utilized.

Effective implementation of these principles has not yet been satisfactorily achieved, in Germany or in other countries. About the middle of the 1980s public confidence in the competence of the Christian democratic government in regard to environmental policy had begun to diminish or subside (there was wide criticism due to this government's friendly attitude towards industry).<sup>2</sup> The Chancellor was forced to set a political precedence and made a quick decision to establish a ministry of the environment in 1986 (prompted in part by the accident at Chernobyl).

### METHODS OF GERMAN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Above and beyond the laws and regulations covering the important areas of production and service industries, autonomous and semi-

<sup>2</sup> The extremely liberal endorsement or licensing procedure of the Minister of the Interior in power as well as the First Minister of the Environment to be appointed are not the subject of this article and will therefore not be mentioned further here.

## ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERIENCES AND POLICIES

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autonomous information and monitoring institutions are the most important tools in German environmental policy.

### Information and monitoring

#### (a) Institutions and bodies

- Sachverständigenrat (SVR), a committee made up of non-affiliated scientists
- The semi-autonomous Federal Environmental Agency (UMPLIS), with its environmental statistics, and information and documentation systems on the environment
- The Federal Institute of Research for the Conservation of Nature and Ecology
- The Federal Department of Health

#### (b) Functions

- Providing government funds for non-governmental research institutes and awarding research grants to private parties for projects concerning the environment.
- Giving financial and material support to educational programmes related to the environment to be carried out in public schools and through the media.
- Examining violations of environmentally safe practices, training a police force for the protection of the environment, and strengthening environmental law.
- Evaluating the attitude of industry to investing in methods of environmental protection and overall studies carried out by industry concerning the protection of the environment.

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- Evaluating sociological data on the behaviour of the general public where the environment is concerned.

All of the "monitors" mentioned above are of equal importance.

Institutions for information and monitoring such as the SVR (the committee of specialists in environmental affairs) and the Federal Ministry for Environmental Protection (UBA) gain importance and influence through the cross-sectional, or transverse function which the Ministry for Environmental Protection plays in the cabinet. In this case the most important point is that a specialized ministry does not simply develop a specific sectoral policy (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture, or in this case the Federal Ministry for Environmental Protection). A specialized ministry should be organized so that it is in a position to coordinate its special field of expertise with and between the other ministries represented in the cabinet. In German politics this is brought about by the existence of what are called complementary departments or divisions. At best, every ministry has departments which are set up to keep in contact with the most important current developments in the work of the other ministries. In this way, settlements made at the political level (Minister, deputy minister) can be prepared much more effectively and are more realistic.

If and when a qualified department for environmental affairs is established in every ministry, the Ministry of Agriculture may stop putting so much emphasis on increasing production at all costs and start regarding agricultural production as a long-term economic endeavour. For example, the environment division of the Ministry of Finance helps to compute an ecological calculation for the general national account. The environment division of the Ministry of Transport propagates the development of an ecologically friendly traffic system in order to improve conditions in urban areas. In the Ministry of Energy the environment division is participating on a large scale in the development of a policy for the use of forms of regenerated (reclaimed) energy.

## ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERIENCES AND POLICIES

It is to be expected that on the whole the environment divisions of these ministries help reduce resistance to a comprehensive environmental policy, since every ministry makes its own contribution to this policy.

The reunification of Germany in November 1989 resulted in an immediate shift in emphasis in environmental issues within the now undivided German population. At the end of 1989 a survey was done on "which groups or institutions should become especially active in the future so that measures dealing with the protection of the environment could be carried out quickly and effectively." At the time, private business and industry were ahead with 72 percent of the ballot. By the end of 1990 this figure had decreased to 69 percent. Instead, the function of the Federal Minister of Environment and the federal government had taken its place. However, in a similar survey taken at the end of 1990, more than half of those interviewed expressed the opinion that such varying institutions as the Federal Ministry of Environment, private environmental groups, the entire federal government, private businesses, State governments, and citizens initiatives as well as the European Community should actively work together in developing a modern environmental policy. In other words, a "great green coalition" should be formed.<sup>3</sup>

The reality of the situation in Germany is perceived by the majority of the population for what it is, a national "state of emergency." In this situation, the leadership of the government is accepted by the population. In a normal situation, age groups up until about 30 consider citizens' campaigns for the protection of the environment to be the most important support of an effective environmental policy. In 1989, 53 percent of those surveyed confirmed this; in 1990 the figure was 61 percent.

The pattern of affiliation and authority has been greatly simplified in this article. In reality it is much more complicated where the practice of German environmental policy is concerned. It should be stressed that three clearly defined levels of competence within the realm of the State (federal, State, municipal) already exist: the related parliaments, the

<sup>3</sup> *Nature* magazine, No. 1 (1991), Munich.

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ministries and their agencies. In addition, at all three levels there are integrated government offices for dealing with matters of the environment. In reality the price for this maze of accountability is that the required effectiveness has not been reached, neither where federal law is concerned nor for systematic observation or reporting on the environment. In addition there is the general community with its even more complex web of political parties, lobbies, NGOs, and mass media. All have direct influence at the State level and also try to influence the parliaments and administrative offices through coordinating activities (forums, the media). The State as well as civil society must accept this structural interrelationship and use whatever methods are necessary to achieve success.

Initially, Germany had no specific federal ministry for the environment. The administrative power lay in the hands of the Ministry of the Interior. An inter-ministerial coordinating committee was created in 1970. The ministries involved formed an "environmental cabinet" with the head of the federal government as chief administrator. The Ministry of the Interior not only increased the staff of the environmental division right from the start but established an external advisory office in 1971. The semi-autonomous SVR and the Forum for the Exchange of Opinions and Information (AGU), which included all social groups, were part of this institution and still exist today. This forum was set up to establish communication among the concerned administrative offices, scientific institutions and public organizations.<sup>4</sup> In 1974 the semi-autonomous Federal Institute for the Environment was founded. Its function was to advise the government, initiate research programmes and educate the public.

From the start, the "supportive structure" of the federal government of Germany played an important role. All 11 of the existing federal States quickly established either an environmental ministry or clearly defined ministerial responsibility. The ministers from all the individual

<sup>4</sup> This forum was named the Task Force for Environmental Affairs; it is still in existence.

## ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERIENCES AND POLICIES

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States founded their own coordinating body, the Ministerial Conference for Environmental Affairs, which began consultations at the end of 1972. This conference provided the newly appointed ministers for environmental affairs their own forum from which they attempted to campaign for the new principles of environmental protection against their colleagues from the State ministries of finance.

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### ANNEX

#### STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS OF DECENTRALIZED GERMAN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

- An independent Federal Ministry for Environmental Protection was founded in June 1986.
- The German Parliament (*Bundestag*) passes environmental laws with input from the States (*Bundesrat*).
- The States have a say in environmental policy through their representatives in the federal legislative chamber, their own ministries for the environment, and their jurisdiction in enforcing the law.
- The municipal governments can make autonomous decisions on local matters (including those related to the environment). They have the jurisdiction to set up industrial parks, participate in traffic planning (with the exception of federal motorways) and establish natural preserves or parks. In cooperation with their respective State governments, they are responsible for enforcing the law against those who damage the environment.
- The universities are owned and run by their home States, and in this matter the States are almost completely autonomous. This allows the universities more flexibility in research and educational matters and in the choice of their academic emphasis. Since the end of 1980 the University of Bayreuth has specialized in courses in environmental technology and ecology. In addition there are a good number of independent research institutes and their affiliates as well as many non-governmental institutions of adult education.
- The political parties began to pay attention to environmental policy when the "Greens" entered Parliament in 1983. Today more

## **ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERIENCES AND POLICIES**

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realistic environmental policy is developed and put into practice by the German socialists (SPD), the liberals (the Free Democratic Party [FDP]) and even the Christian democrats (CDU) than the Greens, who, to say the least, have served as a catalyst. They still fulfil this function in several States (in coalition with the SPD) and in numerous municipal administrations.

- Where pressure groups, particularly organized industry or unions, are concerned, the attitude for many years was one of non-commitment where the environment was concerned. During the second half of the 1980s it was apparent that environmental problems were being taken more seriously due to the negative effect they were having on the special interests of these groups. This resulted in a great amount of effort on the part of the entrepreneur to make the production process more environment-friendly and reduced the union's fears that jobs would be lost if legislation for the protection of the environment were passed.
- Civil society makes itself heard through citizens' initiatives of varying effectiveness and through organizations for the protection of the environment. Both are rather weak financially and rely on the strength of their members' convictions. It should be noted that many have an excellent knowledge of environmental law and the procedures involved in licensing industry and its production methods. This knowledge has been gained through many years of experience with class-action lawsuits. This qualifies many of these organizations to play a greater role in the enforcement of current environmental laws.

## **FACTS ABOUT THE UAE**



## AN ANCIENT PEOPLE, A YOUNG COUNTRY\*

*Emirates Centre for Developmental  
and Strategic Research (ECDSR)*

The United Arab Emirates is a federation of seven Emirates formerly known as the Trucial States, which came together after the British withdrawal from east of Suez in December 1971 to form the Arabian peninsula's youngest country.

Largest and most populous is the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, in which the federal capital is situated, while the other members, in order of size, are Dubai, Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah, Fujairah, Umm al-Qaiwain and Ajman.

For around a century and a half from 1820, the Sheikhdoms, or Emirates, were in treaty relations with Britain, which controlled their foreign affairs and defence, although they retained their own sovereignty.

Since 1971, the country has been an active member of international organizations such as the United Nations and its specialized agencies, the League of Arab States, the non-aligned movement and the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

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\* Data in this chapter is from the Statistical Office of the UAE Ministry of Planning.

## FACTS ABOUT THE UAE

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The Arab Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), whose six members are the UAE, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman, was founded at a summit conference in Abu Dhabi in May 1981.

### AREA AND POPULATION

The UAE lies on the southern shores of the Arabian Gulf, with a small coastline on the Gulf of Oman, and has a total area of around 83,600 square kilometres, including over 100 offshore islands.

In 1968, the population was 179,000, rising to 557,877 in 1975 and 1,622,464 at the last census, conducted in 1985. The 1992 population estimate was 2.1 million. The most populous Emirate is Abu Dhabi, followed by Dubai and Sharjah.

The official language is Arabic, although English is widely used by expatriate communities and in commerce. The State religion is Islam, which also provides the basis of the legal system. Islam first took root in the area that now comprises the UAE during the lifetime of the Prophet Mohammed.

Minority communities of expatriate Christians and members of other religious communities are permitted to practice their religion freely and without hindrance.

### GEOGRAPHY

The UAE's climate is hot and humid from May, however, to September, reaching 45 degrees centigrade. During the other months it is temperate with occasional, sometimes heavy, rainfall, especially during the winter months.

The country is made up primarily of arid desert and salt flats, with gravel plains in the north. A more fertile strip runs along the coastline on

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the Gulf of Oman, while part of the Hajar mountain range runs on a roughly north-east to south-west axis through the country.

### GOVERNMENT

The head of State, the President, is His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Ruler of Abu Dhabi since 1966, who was elected in 1971, and who has been re-elected at subsequent five-year intervals by his colleagues on the Supreme Council of Rulers.

The Vice President, who is also Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, is His Highness Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid al-Maktoum, who succeeded his father Sheikh Rashid in October 1990.

The Supreme Council of Rulers is the country's top policy-making body. It is made up of their Highnesses Sheikh Zayed, Sheikh Maktoum, Dr. Sheikh Sultan bin Mohammed al-Qassimi (Ruler of Sharjah), Sheikh Saqr bin Mohammed al-Qassimi (Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah), Sheikh Rashid bin Ahmed al-Mu'alla (Ruler of Umm al-Qaiwain), Sheikh Humaid bin Rashid al-Nuaimi (Ruler of Ajman) and Sheikh Hamad bin Mohammed al-Sharqi (Ruler of Fujairah).

The Crown Princes and Deputy Rulers are: Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler of Abu Dhabi, as well as Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces; Sheikh Khalid bin Saqr al-Qassimi, Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah; Sheikh Saud bin Rashid al-Mu'alla, Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler of Umm al-Qaiwain; Sheikh Amman bin Humaid al-Nuaimi, Crown Prince of Ajman; Sheikh Ahmed bin Sultan al-Qassimi, Deputy Ruler of Sharjah; Sheikh Hamad bin Saif al-Sharqi, Deputy Ruler of Fujairah; Sheikh Sultan bin Saqr al-Qassimi, Deputy Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah; and Sheikh Nasser bin Rashid al-Nuaimi, Deputy Ruler of Ajman.

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The day-to-day affairs of State are handled by the Cabinet, headed by the Prime Minister, or in his absence by the Deputy Prime Minister, Sheikh Sultan bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

The Supreme Commander of the country's armed forces is the President, while the Deputy Supreme Commander is Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The Minister of Defence is General Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum, while the Chief of Staff is Major General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

The country's parliament, composed of members drawn from each Emirate (eight each from Abu Dhabi and Dubai, six each from Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah and four each from Umm al-Qaiwain, Ajman and Fujairah) is known as the Federal National Council.

Each Emirate also has its own local institutions of government, whose nature depends on the size and population of the Emirate concerned. Abu Dhabi has an Executive Council, chaired by the Crown Prince, while there is also a National Consultative Council, with its members being drawn from among the tribes and families of the Emirate's citizenry.

### FEDERAL NATIONAL COUNCIL

The Federal National Council (FNC) was formally established on 13 February 1972, a landmark in the country's constitutional and legislative evolution.

Its members elect a Speaker, two Deputy Speakers and two Rapporteurs, while the executive committee of its Parliamentary Affairs section is headed by the Speaker and includes the Council's Under-Secretary, the Secretary-General and four elected members.

The structure also includes eight specialized committees dealing with studies of draft laws and general topics referred to them by the

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Council, in addition to the legislative, legal, education, health, social, planning, labour, oil and mineral resources, agriculture and fisheries and public works sectors.

The Council's Secretariat is headed by the Secretary-General.

The FNC's members, who are chosen by the Rulers of their Emirates in consultation with senior local personalities, have the power to summon Ministers, to review the work of their Ministries and to amend and review all legislation.

In 1975, the FNC joined the Arab Parliamentary Union (APU) and has subsequently been elected twice to its presidency. It is also a member of the International Parliamentary Union (IPU). In both bodies it participates actively, often in close collaboration with other Gulf and Arab States.

It frequently sends parliamentary delegations abroad and receives visiting delegations from other APU and IPU member countries.

### THE CABINET

The Cabinet (Council of Ministers) was last reconstituted on 20 November 1990, since which time its membership and the allocation of ministerial portfolios has remained unchanged, apart from a new Minister of Interior, following his predecessor's retirement.

### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE UAE, 1972-1992

The United Arab Emirates obtains most of its wealth from the production of oil and gas. It is the region's third largest oil producer, after Saudi Arabia and Iran, averaging over 2.3 million barrels per day.

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Its reserves of about 200 billion barrels are enough to last for over another hundred years at present rates of extraction, while the reserves of gas—some 200 trillion cubic feet—could last even longer.

The wealth generated by oil has been used, particularly since the formation of the UAE federation 21 years ago, by a sagacious and far-sighted leadership to lift the economy from below subsistence level to among the most prosperous in the world. Trade is virtually free and the economy operates under a *laissez-faire* policy. There is complete political stability, and the country is a magnet for enterprise and entrepreneurs from all over the world.

Its strategic location at the mouth of the Arabian Gulf, one of the most important waterways in the world, and a well-developed infrastructure of ports, airports and motorways, have combined to give the UAE considerable inherent advantages, which the experienced mercantile community has skilfully used to turn the country into the entrepôt of the Gulf. Intra-regional trade and transshipment of goods to and from all parts of the world, and a fast-developing industry, only some of it oil-based, are taking an ever increasing share of the GDP, which was approximately Dh 130 billion (\$35.4 billion) in 1992.

Efforts to broaden the economic base have borne fruit. The share of the oil sector in GDP, once well over half the total, has progressively fallen, and is now around 40 percent, and, with soft international oil prices, is expected to decline further as the rest of the economy continues to develop unabated.

In 1991, for example, the oil sector accounted for 42.77 percent of total GDP of Dh 126.3 billion, falling to 41.17 percent of a total of Dh 130.1 billion in 1992. Average oil prices continued to show a lower trend in the first 10 months of 1993, suggesting a further fall in the relative importance of the oil sector. Estimates for 1993 suggest the oil sector will account for slightly under 40 percent of total GDP.

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Non-oil revenues, almost negligible in the 1970s, are growing fast, in both the government and private sectors. Growth in both sectors, which was very fast in the early years of the federation, has now steadied. The oil sector has grown since 1972 by an average of around 14 percent a year, and the non-oil sector by around 20 percent.

The trade balance is healthy, underpinned by the export of oil and gas, although it is subject to considerable fluctuations as a result of changing oil prices. In 1990 for example, when oil prices rose after the invasion of Kuwait, the trade balance showed a surplus of Dh 37 billion, falling to Dh 30.2 billion in 1991 as a result of the drop in oil prices after the end of the Gulf crisis.

The UAE is a small country and, despite its oil wealth, still a developing one. Its domestic economy, also relatively small, is naturally vulnerable to events in the region. An example of this was seen in the seven-month-long crisis caused by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Its effect on the economies of the region lasted a good deal longer. At the beginning of 1991, the clouds of war loomed large over the Gulf, threatening to bring the Emirates' economy, like that of its neighbours, to a grinding halt. The non-oil sector was the hardest hit.

Since then, however, the picture has changed dramatically, and at the end of 1993, the whole of the country was once again witnessing a significant boom, affecting virtually every sector of the economy.

## OVERSEAS AID

In a world where poverty and suffering is the lot of much of mankind, it is the duty of those who are more fortunate to play their part in helping to improve the lot of their brethren. Since the creation of the United Arab Emirates in 1971, and indeed even before then, one underlying principle of State policy laid down by the President, His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, was that it should use its

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own good fortune in terms of oil resources to provide assistance to others less fortunate.

This policy is not simply a way of obtaining friends, but is a matter of right and justice in this increasingly interdependent world, where the fortunes of us all are intimately intertwined. Likewise, it is incumbent upon all Muslims to provide help to their fellow men, and, in response to this, over the course of the past couple of decades, the UAE has emerged as one of the world's major donors of international aid, even though it has at the same time been in the middle of its own extensive development programme.

The Abu Dhabi Development Fund (ADDF), the main channel for administering the country's government-to-government assistance, was established in July 1971, before the UAE itself emerged on the international stage. Originally known as the Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development, its name was changed to the Abu Dhabi Development Fund in November 1993.

It was established on the orders of Sheikh Zayed with the task of offering development assistance on concessionary terms to other countries throughout the Arab world. Following the October 1973 war between the Arab States and Israel and the consequent increases in oil prices, and in recognition of the effect that these would have upon the economies of all developing nations, instructions were given that the Fund should widen its sphere of operations to include all developing countries. With an authorized capital of Dh 4 billion, of which Dh 2.13 billion is paid up, the Fund has provided concessionary loans, grants and technical assistance worth around Dh 10.5 billion for more than 100 projects in 43 countries in the Arab world, sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Mediterranean. The figure includes finance provided directly by the government of Abu Dhabi but administered by the Fund, in the neighbourhood of Dh 3.998 billion.

Most of the funds provided through the Fund, whether from its own resources or from other organs of government, have been made available

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in the form of concessionary loans, usually offered with a low rate of interest, a lengthy period of repayment and a long grace period.

### OVERALL DEVELOPMENT

Since the formation of the federation of the United Arab Emirates in 1971, the country has witnessed great achievements in all aspects of life. The standard of living has risen to become one of the highest in the world, and a solid modern infrastructure has been created. The economic, social and cultural development of the UAE in the last two decades or so is unparalleled in such a short period, particularly because of the successes achieved in terms of providing services to the country's citizens and residents. A simple statement of figures comparing the economy in 1972 and in 1992 provides ample evidence of the growth:

- **National income:** Up from Dh 4.7 billion in 1972 to Dh 107.6 billion in 1992, an annual growth rate of 16.9 percent.
- **National savings:** Up from Dh 3.5 billion in 1972 to Dh 24 billion in 1992.
- **Trade surplus:** Up from Dh 3.1 billion in 1972 to Dh 21.9 billion in 1992.
- **Social services:** Extensive provisions have been made in fields such as education, housing, health and roads.
- **Final consumption expenditure:** Up from Dh 1.7 billion in 1972 to Dh 81.2 billion in 1992.
- **Investments:** Up from Dh 1.7 billion in 1972 to Dh 29.8 billion in 1992.

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An examination of the development in more detail, using figures compiled by the Ministry of Planning, underlines the scale of the economy's growth during the 20-year period under discussion.

### A. GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

Ministry of Planning statistics show that GDP rose from Dh 6.5 billion in 1972 to Dh 130.2 billion in 1992, an annual growth rate of 16.2 percent. GDP (excluding the oil sector) rose from Dh 2.4 billion in 1972 to Dh 77 billion in 1992, which indicates the remarkable growth of the country's economy and also emphasizes the success of the government in encouraging diversification away from dependence on the oil sector.

#### 1. Capital investment

Due to the importance of investment in encouraging development, the UAE has given investment substantial attention since the formation of the federation, thus helping to stimulate a faster rate of growth. Total fixed capital investment in the non-oil sector rose from Dh 2.4 billion in 1972 to Dh 29.8 billion in 1992, while government investment rose over the same period from Dh 1.7 billion to Dh 245.5 billion. Also over the same period, private consumption rose from Dh 872 million to Dh 22.8 billion.

The ratio of investments to GDP reached 22.9 percent in 1992, high in comparison with ratios achieved elsewhere in both developing and developed countries.

During the last 21 years, investments have been made in all services and commodity sectors. At the inception of the UAE, due to the country's need for services, the services sector was given top priority. During the last few years, however, priority has been given to the production sector, which achieved a rate of 56.9 percent of overall investment in 1992.

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### Development of GDP in the UAE, 1972-1992

*(In millions of UAE dirhams)*

Sector	1972	1992	Annual growth rate (percentage)
Agriculture and fisheries	116	2730	17.1
Crude oil, mining and quarrying	4095	53116	13.7
Other	4	355	25.1
Manufacturing	176	9942	22.3
Electricity and water	84	2869	19.3
Construction	408	11125	20
Wholesale/retail trade, hotels and restaurants	490	13020	17.8
Transport, storage and communications	476	7167	14.5
Finance and insurance	43	6431	28.4
Real estate	240	8180	19.3
Other services	29	2931	26
Less: imputed bank service charges	—	2684	—
Producers and government services	289	14376	21.6
Household domestic services	—	605	—
Total	6450	130163	16.2
Total of non-oil sectors	2355	77047	19

## FACTS ABOUT THE UAE

Overall fixed capital according to economic sector for 1972 and 1993 (in millions of Dh at current rates) was as follows:

Sector	1972	1992	Annual growth rate (percentage)
Agriculture and fisheries	13	487	20.0
Mining and quarrying	473	7620	14.9
Manufacturing	241	4725	16.0
Electricity and water	91	2921	18.9
Construction	74	1200	14.9
Wholesale/retail trade, hotels and restaurants	35	2416	23.6
Transportation, storage and communications	455	51984	12.9
Finance, insurance and real estate	76	1520	16.2
Government and personal services	262	3719	14.2
Total	1720	29802	15.3

The business sector (public and private) has played a prominent role in enhancing development during the past 21 years; this sector directed about Dh 19.8 billion in 1992 into investments, 66.3 percent of the overall investment carried out during the same year. Government investments rose from Dh 610 million in 1972 to Dh 10 billion in 1992 at an annual growth rate of 15 percent.

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The formation of overall fixed capital according to public and private sector (in millions of Dh) for 1972 and 1992 was as follows:

Sector	1972	1992	Annual growth rate (percentage)
Federal	25	982	20.1
Emirates	585	9052	14.7
Government, total	610	10034	15.0
Business and private, total	1110	19768	15.5
Total	1720	29802	15.3

### 2. Final consumption

The size of annual final consumption rose from Dh 1.7 billion in 1972 to Dh 81.2 billion in 1992. Government consumption rose from Dh 859 million in 1972 to Dh 22.8 billion in 1992. Private (household) consumption rose from Dh 872 million in 1972 to Dh 58.3 billion in 1992 due to the high standard of living enjoyed by UAE citizens.

Final government and private consumption for 1972 and 1992 (in millions of Dh) was as follows:

Sector	1972	1992	Annual growth rate (percentage)
Government consumption	859	22892	17.8
Private consumption	872	58334	23.4
Final consumption	1731	81226	21.2

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### 3. Foreign trade

During the past few years, the UAE has recorded a consistent surplus in the balance of foreign trade, which rose from Dh 3.1 billion in 1972 to Dh 21.9 billion in 1992, making the country a prominent centre of both regional and international trade.

Commodity exports rose from Dh 4.6 billion in 1972 to Dh 65.8 billion in 1992, while commodity imports increased from Dh 2.2 billion to Dh 64.2 billion over the same period. Re-exports rose from Dh 778 million in 1972 to Dh 20.3 billion in 1992 at an annual growth rate of 17.7 percent.

Sector	Millions of dirhams		Annual growth rate (percentage)
	1972	1992	
Commodity exports	4555	65788	14.2
Re-exports	778	20300	17.7
Total commodity exports	5333	86068	14.9
Total commodity imports	2229	64200	18.3
Balance of trade	3104	21888	10.3

### 4. Labour force and salaries

The size of the labour force rose from 145,000 in 1972 to 769,000 in 1992, covering all economic and social sectors in the UAE. Similarly,

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salaries rose from Dh 1,257 million in 1972 to Dh 31,329 million in 1992 at an annual growth rate of 17.4 percent.

### Development of labour force and salaries, 1972 and 1992

Sector	1972	1992	Annual growth rate (percentage)
Number of workers (in thousands)	145	769	8.7
Salaries (in million Dh)	1257	31329	17.4
Average salary (in thousand Dh)	9	35.1	7.0
Workers' productivity (in thousand Dh)	17	68.6	8.5
Capital expenditure	1016	18678*	
Total expenditure	1951	45735*	

\* For 1993.

Excluding the government sector, the breakdown of the workforce for 1992 was as follows:

Construction	120,000
Trade	102,000
Transport and communications	72,000
Manufacturing	64,000
Agriculture	44,000
Utilities	21,000
Finance and real estate	19,000
Mining	10,000



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### 4. General finance

Since the inception of the UAE, the government financial policy has played a major role in coping with the budget deficit, in spite of the circumstances that affected the region. In 1992 a surplus of Dh 1.7 billion was achieved in the budget. Public expenditure rose from Dh 1.9 billion in 1972 to Dh 45.7 billion in 1992, while public revenues rose from Dh 2.5 billion in 1972 to Dh 47.4 billion in 1992.

#### Development of public expenditure and revenues, 1972 and 1992

Item	1972	1992
Current revenues	2423	43941
Capital revenues	106	3460
Total revenues	2529	47401
Current expenditure	935	27057
Capital expenditure	1016	18678
Total expenditure	1951	45735

### B. DEVELOPMENT BY SECTOR

#### 1. Agriculture and fisheries

Since the inception of the UAE, the government has paid particular attention to the agricultural sector. As a result the country has achieved self-sufficiency in fish and vegetables for much of the year, with a surplus available for export, while the introduction of modern techniques has led to the formation of a steadily growing agri-business industry. Agricultural production is now worth around Dh 3.44 billion a year, equivalent to 2 percent of GDP.

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The area under cultivation rose from 141,000 dunums in 1972 to 653,000 dunums in 1992, an annual growth rate of 8 percent. Production of vegetables rose over the same period from 22,000 tonnes to 487,000 tonnes, an annual increase of 16.7 percent, while production of dates and other fruits increased from 35,000 tonnes a year to 270,000 tonnes a year, a year-on-year growth of 10.7 percent.

The area planted with vegetables amounted to 98,458 dunums in 1992, up from 15,943 dunums in 1977, while the area planted with palm trees rose over the same period from 40,320 dunums to 292,898 dunums (of which the area for date production rose from 6,870 dunums to 96,469 dunums) and with other fruit trees from 6,468 dunums to 41,618 dunums. Fodder production rose from 20,000 tonnes to 456,000 tonnes at an annual rate of increase of 17 percent.

Major successes have also been achieved in afforestation, part of a campaign to combat desertification. In the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, 152 plantations have been developed in rural areas, covering 135,000 hectares with 26 million trees.

The number of head of livestock rose from 278,000 to 1,700,000, an annual growth rate of 7 percent, while output of dairy products increased from 500 tonnes to 79,200 tonnes. Also during the period 1972 to 1992, annual production of eggs rose from 1 million to 217.7 million, and of poultry from 500 tonnes to 15,700 tonnes, annual increases of 31 percent and 18.8 percent respectively.

The number of fishing boats rose from 1,526 to 3,536, while fish production rose from 47,000 tonnes in 1972 to 95,000 tonnes in 1992.

The percentage of self-sufficiency achieved is an indication of the progress made: it stands at 41 percent for vegetables, 40 percent for eggs, 87 percent for milk, 100 percent for fish, 20 percent for meat and 27 percent for poultry.

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### Agricultural development

	1972	1992
Agricultural production (in million Dh)	154	3437
Gross added value (in million Dh)	116	2737
Annual investments (in million Dh)	16	488
Agricultural farms (number)	4940	20535
Agricultural areas (hectares)	14100	65321
Farms applying modern irrigation methods (number)	—	4500
Greenhouses (number)	—	3400
Forested area (hectares)	1712	135000
Green areas (hectares)	—	2866.5
Parks (number)	—	130
Vegetable production (thousand tonnes)	22	486
Date and fruit production (thousand tonnes)	35	270
Fodder production (thousand tonnes)	20	456.5
Animal resources (thousands of head)	278	1007
Modern dairy farms (number)	1	21
Total milk production (thousand tonnes)	0.5	79.2
Egg production (millions)	1	217.7
Poultry meat (thousand tonnes)	0.5	15.7
Fishing boats (number)	1526	3536
Fish production (thousand tonnes)	47	95

### 2. Crude oil, mining and quarrying

Since the first oil exports in 1962, the UAE has made great strides in the development of its oil industry. Proven reserves that can be

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extracted using current techniques of oil recovery are now estimated at over 100 billion barrels, compared with 32.7 billion barrels in the late 1970s, and make the country one of the world's top four States in terms of reserves.

	1972	1992
Production value (in million Dh)	4500	57241
Added value (in million Dh)	4095	53116
Capital formation (in million Dh)	470	7513
Labour force (number)	4400	8420
Production (in million barrels)	1.22	2.150

The oil and gas sector is the largest component of the UAE economy, and, despite substantial success in diversification, it still accounts for around 40 percent of GDP. The bulk of the country's production is from the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, although Dubai, Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah are also producers. Basic data on the sector is as follows:

First oil shipment	4 July 1962 (from Umm Shaif)
First onshore field	Bab, discovered in 1958
First offshore field	Umm Shaif, discovered in 1958
Oil reserves	Approximately 100 billion barrels
Gas reserves	200 trillion standard cubic feet
Biggest buyer of UAE oil	Japan (50 percent of oil exports)
Refinery capacity	200,000 bpd

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Offshore gas production	1,067 million cubic feet/day
Onshore gas production	739 million cf/d
Annual production of refined products	10.5 million tonnes
Annual consumption of refined products	6 million tonnes
Crude oil production capacity	2.5 million bpd
Actual production (1993 4th quarter)	2.161 mbpd

### 3. Manufacturing

#### Value added in manufacturing, by industrial activity (In millions of dirhams)

	1972	1992
Foodstuffs, beverages and tobacco	26	738
Textiles, garments and leather	—	582
Wood, furniture and wood products	30	285
Paper, paper products, publications and printing	20	267
Chemicals, oil products, rubber and plastics	12	5439
Non-metallic mining raw products	26	752
Basic metal industry	12	770
Tools, equipment and other metal products	28	955
Other manufactured items	22	154
<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>9942</b>

A major proportion of the medium- and small-sized projects, particularly those concerned with consumer products, have been established by private enterprise.

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The Emirates Industrial Bank has also played a major role in the provision of venture capital. The oil and gas industry constituted about 50 percent of the total added value in the manufacturing sector in 1992. Unofficial reports indicate that about 10.5 million tonnes of oil products were produced, with local demand estimated at 6 million tonnes, while the rest was exported. The production of liquefied gas reached about 8.5 million tonnes in 1992, most of which was exported.

### Industry

At the end of 1992, the UAE had 904 separate industrial units broken down thus: metals, 199; chemicals, 188; non-metal manufacturing, 117; textiles, 116; food, 94; and timber/wood, 70.

The largest share of manufactured industrial exports, by value, was taken by aluminium, produced by the DUBAL smelter in Dubai. Manufactured exports as a whole were worth Dh 1.8 billion, representing 15 percent of annual total output. Overall, the manufacturing industry accounted for 8 percent of GDP, or Dh 9 billion.

#### Manufacturing sector (In million Dh)

	1972	1992
Production	425	20872
Added value	176	9942
Capital formation	241	4725
Labour force	8200	69320

### 4. Electricity and water

The country's investment in this sector rose from Dh 90 million in 1972 to Dh 2,921 million in 1992 at an annual growth rate of 19 percent.

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Due to this, the generated power rose from 470 million kWh in 1972 to 19,117 million kWh in 1992.

Due to the increasing demand for electricity and water, consumption has risen sharply, reaching an annual growth rate of 21.3 percent for electricity, and 18.3 percent for water.

Per capita consumption of electricity in 1972 was 1,320 kW, rising to 8,000 kW in 1992.

Water production rose from 3,942 million gallons in 1972 to 102,551 million gallons in 1992, at an annual growth rate of 17.7 percent.

	1972	1992	Annual growth rate (percentage)
Generated energy (million kWh)	470	19117	20.4
Energy consumption (million kWh)	400	19053	21.3
Water production (million gallons)	3942	102251	17.7
Water consumption (million gallons)	3407	97410	18.3
Investment value (million Dh)	90	2921	19

### 5. Transportation, stores and communications

The first phase of development focused on horizontal expansion by increasing the length of the road network and building ports and airports.

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The highway network increased from 500 km to 3,171 km, with bridges, tunnels and underpasses being built to facilitate the flow of traffic. The number of vehicles rose from 31,000 in 1972 to 345,000 in 1992, an annual rate of increase of 13 percent, while the average number of cars per thousand of the population rose from 97 to 172.

In the shipping sector, the number of modern ports rose from 2 to 15, and handling capacity from 2 million to 33 million tonnes a year, an annual growth rate of 15 percent. Total annual container handling has now reached nearly 3 million units a year, with the ports of Dubai and Fujairah both in the world's top 50. The Abu Dhabi National Oil Tankers Company operates 13 oil and gas tankers, in addition to a national commercial fleet of more than 700 ships.

The number of airports rose from 2 to 5, with a sixth due to open in early 1994, and passenger traffic rose from 1 million to 8.8 million per year, an annual growth rate of 12 percent. Plane movements rose from 41,000 to 133,000 at a growth rate of 6 percent annually. The Emirates Airlines fleet now includes 15 planes flying international routes, while Abu Dhabi Aviation has 34 aircraft for internal flights. The UAE also holds a quarter of the shares of Gulf Air.

The country is connected directly by telephone with 185 countries via four satellites. There are 25,900 facsimile lines, while the number of telephone lines rose from 9,000 in 1972 to 620,000 in 1992, an annual growth rate of 22 percent. There are also around 62,000 mobile telephones and 135,000 personal pagers. The number of P.O. boxes rose from 5,000 to 94,000 at an annual growth rate of 47 percent, i.e., 16 boxes for every 1,000 citizens. Express mail and other services have also been introduced.

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### Development in transportation, storage and communications, 1972 and 1992

	1972	1992	Annual growth rate (percentage)
<b>ROAD TRANSPORTATION</b>			
Highway (kilometres)	500	3171	9.7
Number of registered cars (thousand)	31	345	12.8
Number of car accidents (thousand)	4.2	17.5	7.4
Average number of cars (for each thousand people)	97	172	2.9
Average number of car accidents (for each thousand people)	9	9	1.8
<b>SHIPPING</b>			
Commercial ports (number)	2	15	10.6
Length of berths (kilometres)	4	48.2	13.3
Traffic in ports (million tonnes)	2	33	15
Traffic of ships (thousand tonnes)	3	29	12
Passengers by sea (thousand)	72	1295	15.5
Average share of individual in airport services (flights/year)	0.6	1.7	5.3
<b>STORAGE</b>			
Silos (thousand)	—	225	—
<b>TELECOMMUNICATIONS (INTERNATIONAL)</b>			
Satellite stations (number)	—	4	—
Telephone lines (thousand)	620		22.1

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	1972	1992	Annual growth rate (percentage)
<b>TELECOMMUNICATIONS (INTERNAL)</b>			
Fax lines (number)	—	24.1	—
Regular telephone lines (number)	28	245	11.5
<b>POSTAL SERVICES</b>			
Post offices (number)	18	66	6.7
Postal agencies (number)	—	128	—
Private P.O. box compounds (number)	—	53	—
Private post boxes (thousand)	5	94.3	15.8
Ordinary P.O. boxes (for each thousand people)	16	47	5.5

### 6. Finance and insurance

The development of the financial sector over the years reached a key stage with the law establishing the UAE Central Bank in 1980, replacing the previous UAE Currency Board.

Today, the number of commercial banks in the country has risen to 47, including 19 locally incorporated banks, with 326 branches, while funds in circulation have risen from Dh 265.4 million in 1973 to Dh 5,108 million in 1992. Over the same period, deposits rose from Dh 2,970.4 million in 1973 to Dh 75,445 million in 1992, while private local liquidity rose from Dh 2,256.5 million in 1973 to Dh 69,544 million in 1992.

There are now 68 insurance companies in the country, with a total of 184 offices.

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In 1992, the assets of the top five national banks were Dh 81.8 billion, with profits of Dh 1,003 million.

Loans and advances amounted to Dh 30.38 billion.

In the commercial banking sector as a whole, total assets were Dh 147.33 billion, while total bank credit was Dh 73.96 billion.

### 7. Housing

During the period 1972 to 1992 the number of residential units rose from 66,500 to 336,400, with an accompanying development in quality, design and building materials used.

#### Development of residential units, 1972 and 1992 (thousands)

	1972	1992	Annual growth rate (percentage)
Commercial residences	58.4	160.0	5.2
Low-cost houses	5.5	137.0	17.4
Modern houses	2.6	39.5	14.6
Total	66.5	336.4	8.4

### 8. Education

Over the course of the past 20 years, there has been substantial quantitative and qualitative development in the educational system in the UAE. The Emirates' University was established in Al-Ain in 1977 and the first of a chain of Higher Colleges of Technology a decade later; there are now a total of 15 government and private colleges and institutes in the

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country, including specialized institutions like the Etisalat College and the Nursing School.

Besides the government schools—534 for the 1993/1994 academic year—there are 289 private schools, teaching a variety of curricula, including English, French, American, Filipino, Japanese, Urdu, German, and international, with languages including those above as well as Hindi and Malayalam.

The number of students rose from 44,000 in 1972/1973 to 450,000 in 1992/1993, an annual growth rate of 12 percent. The number of university students rose from 520 in the first academic year, 1977/1978, to 9,317 in 1992/1993, an annual growth rate of 21.2 percent, while the number of students receiving government scholarships rose from 401 in 1972 to 1,680 in 1992, an annual increase of 7.4 percent.

The number of students enrolled at the Higher Colleges of Technology rose from 240 in 1988 to 1,800 in 1993, an annual growth rate of 38.3 percent, with Colleges now established in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Al-Ain and Ras al-Khaimah. The number of adult education students rose from 11,000 in 1972 to 18,000 in 1992, an annual growth rate of 2.5 percent.

Government expenditure on education rose from Dh 81.5 million in 1972/1973 to Dh 3,439 million in 1992/1993, an annual growth rate of 20.6 percent.

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### Educational Data, 1972 and 1992

	1972	1992	Increase in numbers
Students (thousand)	44	450	406
Teachers (number)	2309	32634	30325
Schools (number)	147	855	708
Classrooms (number)	1416	16843	15427
Adult education and literacy students (thousand)	11	18	7
University students (number)	—	9317	
Students of other colleges and institutions (number)	—	2230	
Scholarship students (number)	401	1680	1279
Post-graduate students (number)	—	61	
Higher College of Technology students (number)	—	1800	
Graduates (university and higher education) (number)	—	2694	
Total number of graduates from Emirates' University (6,975 women)			11,884
Illiteracy rate (percentage)	—	16.8	

### 9. Health

Medical services have now been extended to every part of the UAE. The number of hospitals rose from 16, with only 1,252 beds in 1972, to 41 with 5,896 beds in 1991, which means 1 bed for each 341 inhabitants.

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### Health Services

Item	1972	1992
Hospitals (number)	16	41
Beds (number)	1252	5896
Health centres (number)	11	127
Private clinics (number)	50	786
Mothercare centres (number)	1	10
School health centres (number)	2	11
Health centre outpatients (million)	1.5	4.5
Physicians (number)	264	3421
Nursing staff (number)	616	8215
Dentists (number)	—	400
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	—	11.7
Incidence of measles (per 100,000)	—	52.8
Incidence of mumps (per 100,000)	—	11.8
Number of blood banks (number)	—	20
Government expenditure (Dh million)	86.1	2133
Life expectancy		
Male: 70 years		
Female: 73 years		

## FACTS ABOUT THE UAE

The number of mothercare centres rose from 1 in 1972 to 10 in 1992, while the number of health centres rose from 11 to 127. Immunization and vaccination rates rose to about 85 to 95 percent. There were 2 school medical centres in 1972 compared with 11 in 1992. The number of physicians rose from 264 in 1972 to 3,421 in 1992, with 1 physician for each 588 inhabitants. The number of nursing staff rose from 616 to 8,215 (1 nurse for each 245 inhabitants).

Government expenditure on health rose from Dh 86 million in 1972 to Dh 2,133 million in 1992, an annual rate of increase of 17.4 percent.

### 10. Other government services

In the field of social services, social aid provided to citizens of the UAE rose from Dh 7.1 million in 1972 to Dh 592 million in 1992, an annual growth rate of 24 percent. The maximum payment per family is Dh 4,640 per month. The number of social development units and centres rose from one in 1972 to nine in 1992, while two centres for the handicapped were established, as well as several centres for the care of the aged. In accordance with Muslim and Arab traditions, however, families are encouraged to care for elderly members at home wherever possible.

The number of women's societies and organizations rose from 1 in 1979 to 10 in 1992.

Sports and chess clubs, numbering 23 in 1972, had risen to 34 in 1992, while the number of players rose from 1,954 in 1972 to 12,387 in 1992, an annual rate of growth of 9.7 percent. There are also four swimming pools, three youth hostels and the Zayed Sports City in Abu Dhabi for local, regional and international events.

Twenty-seven sports clubs and federations are supported by the government, while a total of 12 sports stadiums have been built.

## *An ancient people, a young country*

### 11. Media and information

The UAE has five Arabic daily newspapers, *Al-Ittihad*, *Al-Fajr* and *Al-Wahda* based in Abu Dhabi, *Al-Bayan* in Dubai, and *Al-Khaleej* in Sharjah, and three English newspapers, *Emirates News* from Abu Dhabi, and *Khaleej Times* and *Gulf News* from Dubai.

There are also two general weeklies, two women's weeklies, one children's weekly and a number of other monthly and sporadic publications. There is also a national news agency.

The country has four radio stations and three television stations, in addition to two television stations that broadcast by satellite transmission.

For the use of the public, a number of libraries, theatres, halls and other centres have been created. Among their users are the various folklore societies, which numbered 3 in 1972 and 26 by the end of 1992, with a total of 140 individual troupes.

### Economic Summary (1992 figures)

	1992 (Billions of Dh)
Gross domestic product	130.2
Oil and gas revenue	53.12
Exports and re-exports	81.6
Non-oil exports	5.32
Re-exports	15.31
Imports	64.3
Federal budget	17.3



## FACTS ABOUT THE UAE

### BASIC DATA

**Location/area:** The UAE lies on the southern shores of the Arabian Gulf, with a small coastline on the Gulf of Oman, and has a total area of around 83,600 square kilometres, including over 100 offshore islands.

**Population:** 2.1 million (179,000 in 1968).

**Language:** Arabic is the official language, although English is widely spoken by expatriates and in commerce.

**Religion:** The State religion is Islam, which also provides the basis of the legal system. Minority communities of expatriate Christians and members of other religious communities are permitted to practise their religion freely and without hindrance.

**Time:** GMT + 4

**Currency:** UAE dirham (US\$ 1 = Dh 3.67)

**Climate:** The climate of the UAE is hot and humid from May to October, reaching 45 degrees centigrade (°C). During the other months, the climate is mild and pleasant, with temperatures ranging between 20°C and 28°C and with occasional rainfall.

**Government:** The head of State, the President, is His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, also Ruler of Abu Dhabi since 1966. The Vice President and Prime Minister, also Ruler of Dubai, is His Highness Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid Al Maktoum. The Supreme Council of Rulers is the country's top policy-making body. Day-to-day affairs are handled by the Cabinet, and the country's parliament, composed of members drawn from each Emirate, is known as the Federal National Council. The UAE is represented abroad by 36 embassies in Abu Dhabi, while 6 other countries are represented locally by consulates in Dubai.

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