



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

***U.S. POLICIES TOWARD IRAN AND IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL  
SECURITY IN THE PERSIAN GULF FROM 1979 – 2008***

**SEYED MOHSEN MIRHOSSEINI**

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By

**SEYED MOHSEN MIRHOSSEINI**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**December 2012**

## DEDICATION

Dedicated to my father and mother for their continuous support, love and encouragement throughout my postgraduate study and to my beloved wife, Mahdiah and my loving son,  
Sina



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**Chairman: Sarvinder Kaur Sandhu, PhD**

**Faculty: Human Ecology**

This research examined the US policies toward Iran and its implications on regional security in the Persian Gulf during the period from 1979 – 2008. In addition, the study also evaluated the U.S. policies toward Iran in relations to the Persian Gulf during the presidencies of Carter, Reagan, George HW Bush, Clinton, and George Bush during this period of time. The objectives of the research were achieved by seeking answers to the two research questions: 1) What were the evolutions of the U.S. regional security policies regarding Iran in the Persian Gulf from 1979 to 2008?; 2) What were the influences of the U.S. regional security policies on the regional peace and stability regarding Iran in the Persian Gulf?

Based on the research questions, the goals of this study were to examine and analyze the security policies of different US administrations from the time of the Islamic revolution in

1979 until the end of the George W. Bush presidency in 2008. In other words, the main focus of the study was to understand the security policies of the US administrations during the period from 1979 to 2008 toward Iran in the Persian Gulf region. Therefore, the study attempted to evaluate these security policies to identify and explain the factors of success or failure of these policies in the Persian Gulf region and to finally determine the security status of the Persian Gulf. As such, evaluating the thrust of various US policies toward Iran in the Persian Gulf region will show the success or failure of the US to create peace and security in the region.

For this purpose, the qualitative approach was selected and applied to the study and the data were collected from official websites available on the internet. Such data comprised the speeches of the Iranian and American administrations, official records and documents on security policies of the US toward Iran in the Persian Gulf region including the Arms Export Control Act, U.S. Congress negotiations, US Department of State annual reports, Country Reports on Terrorism, Peterson Institute Documents, and Middle East policy council documents. Thus, the goal of using the qualitative approach was to obtain an in-depth understanding of the security policies of the US toward Iran in the Persian Gulf region during the specified period. The analysis of the data revealed that the unilateral security policies of different US administrations toward Iran in the Persian Gulf did not succeed in establishing stability and peace for the region. Based on the conclusions of the research, the three main findings are outlined as follows:

Firstly, the findings of the current study about the U.S. policies toward Iran in relation to the Persian Gulf region since the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979 show that these policies were always confronted by challenges from local states such as Iran and Iraq and in some cases, a few regional conservative Arab states such as Saudi Arabia. This implies the failure of the unilateral U.S. security policies in the Persian Gulf region.

Secondly, the analysis of the “Regional Security Complex Theory” proves that according to the “Regional Security Complex Theory”, there were significant relationships between the rivalries of the regional states in the Persian Gulf and external interventions. The results revealed that local rivalries led to the interference by external powers in the region. In the case of Iran, the rivalries inside the Gulf Cooperation Council states and between them and Iran and Iraq led to U.S. intervention in the region. Moreover, the results obtained from application of the theory to the realities of the region revealed that the only reasonable solution for the security problems of the Persian Gulf region is a collective security forum that involves all the states of this important area including the GCC states, Iran and Iraq (6+2 arrangement).

Finally, the findings of this study have important implications for the promotion of peace and security in the Persian Gulf region. As the results showed, the various direct and indirect U.S. policies toward Iran related to the Persian Gulf were unable to enhance American demands for a stable condition to maintain their interest in the region. Furthermore, the U.S. policies could not stop Iran’s ambitions to have a collective security policy that involved all the Persian Gulf states in a forum. So the findings of this study

suggest that to stabilize the region, there should be multilateral relations between Iran, Iraq, the GCC and U.S. that consider the concerns of all parties and the participation of all local states for peace and security to be achievable in the region.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**DASAR AMERIKA SYARIKAT TERHADAP NEGARA IRAN DAN IMPLIKASI  
TERHADAP KESELAMATAN SERANTAU DI TELUK PARSİ DARIPADA  
TAHUN 1979 - 2008**

Oleh

**SEYED MOHSEN MIRHOSSEINI**

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Berdasarkan kepada persoalan kajian, matlamat kajian ini adalah untuk membincangkan dasar keselamatan pentadbiran Amerika Syarikat selepas revolusi Islam di Iran dari tahun 1979 sehingga tahun 2008. Tumpuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk menilai dasar-dasar Amerika Syarikat terhadap Iran yang berkaitan dengan Teluk Parsi di bawah pemerintahan Carter, Reagan, George HW Bush, Clinton dan George Bush. Kajian ini juga menilai dasar-dasar keselamatan yang menerangkan faktor kejayaan atau kegagalan dasar-dasar di rantau Teluk Parsi dan seterusnya mengenal pasti keselamatan di Teluk Parsi. Dalam menilai dasar-dasar Amerika Syarikat di rantau Teluk Parsi kajian ini akan menunjukkan kejayaan dan/atau kegagalan Amerika Syarikat untuk mewujudkan keamanan dan keselamatan di Teluk Parsi.



Bagi tujuan kajian ini, kaedah analisis kualitatif telah digunakan dan data pengutipan data adalah dari laman web rasmi. Perolehan data adalah berdasarkan kepada ucapan-ucapan rasmi di negara Iran dan Amerika dan juga daripada rekod-rekod and dokumen-dokumen rasmi mengenai dasar keselamatan Amerika Syarikat terhadap Iran di rantau Teluk Parsi, diantaranya adalah rundingan Kawalan Eksport Senjata Akta Kongres Amerika Syarikat, Laporan Jabatan Tahunan Amerika Syarikat, Laporan Keganasan, Data Institut Peterson dan Data Dasar Timur Tengah. Analisis kualitatif adalah bertujuan untuk mendapatkan pemahaman yang mendalam mengenai dasar keselamatan Amerika Syarikat terhadap negara Iran di Teluk Parsi. Secara am, analisis data menjelaskan dasar keselamatan adalah berbeza-beza dalam pentadbiran Amerika Syarikat terhadap Iran di Teluk Parsi dan gagal menyediakan kestabilan dan keamanan bagi rantau ini. Berdasarkan kesimpulan kajian, tiga penemuan utama digariskan seperti berikut:

Pertama, penemuan kajian berkaitan polisi Amerika Syarikat di Teluk Parsi yang berkaitan dengan rantau Teluk Parsi sejak Revolusi Islam Iran menunjukkan bahawa dasar Amerika Syarikat sentiasa berhadapan dengan cabaran dari negeri-negeri tempatan seperti Iran dan Iraq dan dalam beberapa kes termasuk juga serantau konservatif negara Arab seperti Arab Saudi. Ini bermakna, dasar keselamatan unilateral yang diguna pakai oleh Amerika Syarikat di rantau Teluk Parsi adalah tidak berjaya.

Kedua; analisis "Teori Keselamatan Serantau Kompleks" membuktikan bahawa mengikut "Teori Keselamatan Serantau Complex", terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara persaingan negeri serantau di rantau ini dan campur tangan pihak luar. Hasil kajian

menunjukkan bahawa persaingan tempatan membawa kepada gangguan kuasa luar di rantau ini dan dalam kes Iran, persaingan di dalam Majlis Kerjasama Teluk dan persengetaan antara Iran dan Iraq telah membawa kepada campur tangan Amerika Syarikat di rantau ini. Selain itu, keputusan yang diperoleh daripada teori kepada realiti di rantau ini mendedahkan bahawa satu-satunya penyelesaian bagi masalah keselamatan rantau teluk Parsi adalah mewujudkan satu forum keselamatan kolektif yang melibatkan semua negeri di kawasan ini termasuk negara-negara GCC, Iran dan Iraq (6+2 pengaturan).

Akhirnya, penemuan kajian ini memberikan implikasi yang penting bagi menggalakkan keamanan dan keselamatan di rantau Teluk Parsi. Keputusan kajian menunjukkan, politik AS secara langsung dan tidak langsung terhadap Iran berkaitan dengan Teluk Parsi tidak dapat meningkatkan permintaan Amerika Syarikat untuk mengekalkan kepentingan mereka di rantau ini. Tambahan pula, dasar-dasar Amerika Syarikat tidak dapat menghentikan cita-cita Iran untuk memiliki dasar keselamatan kolektif yang melibatkan semua negeri-negeri Teluk Parsi. Oleh itu, dapatan kajian ini mencadangkan bahawa untuk menstabilkan rantau ini, pengwujudan satu hubungan pelbagai hala antara Iran, Iraq, GCC dan Amerika Syarikat adalah perlu dan penyertaan semua negeri-negeri tempatan adalah penting untuk mendapatkan keamanan dan keselamatan di rantau ini.

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I would like to dedicate this research to all my family members, including my parents, brothers and wife. Their memories and presence have made my life more beautiful.

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on December 13, 2012 to conduct the final examination of Seyed Mohsen Mirhosseini on his thesis entitled " U.S. Policies Toward Iran and Implications for Regional Security in the Persian Gulf from 1979-2008" in accordance with the Universities and University College Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U. (A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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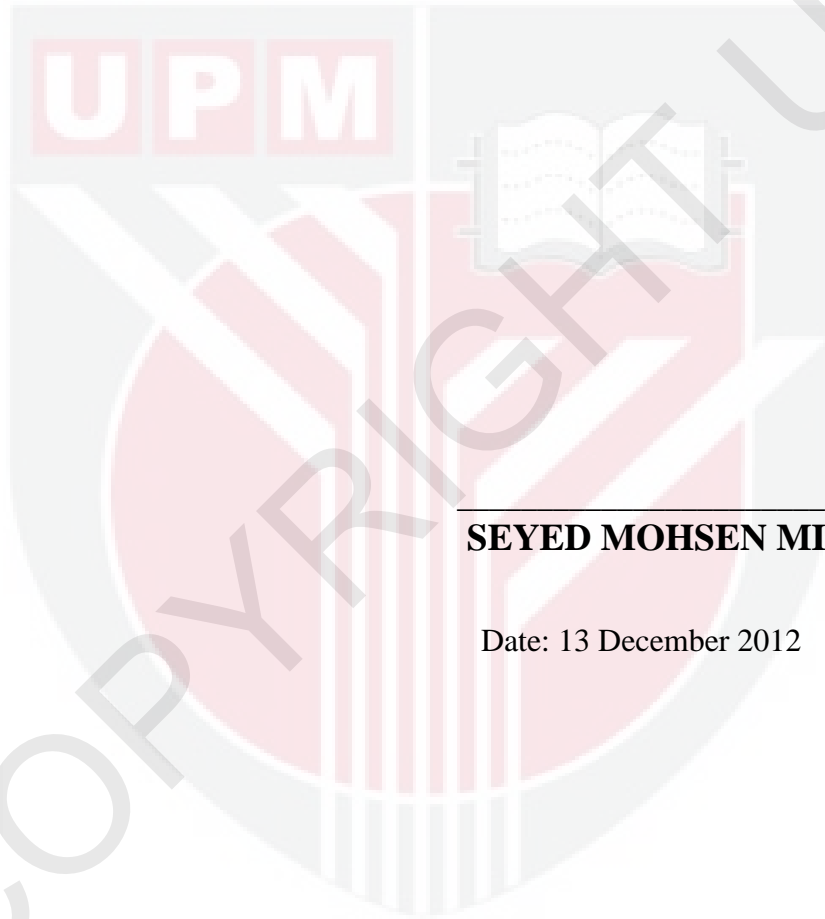
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## DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.



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**SEYED MOHSEN MIRHOSSEINI**

Date: 13 December 2012

## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>ABSTRAK</b>	iii
<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</b>	vii
<b>APPROVAL</b>	x
<b>DECLARATION</b>	xi
<b>TABLE OF CONTENT</b>	xiii
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b>	xiv
	xxi

### CHAPTER

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
	1.1 Introduction	1
	1.2 Background of the Study	2
	1.2.1 The Importance of the Persian Gulf Geopolitics	3
	1.2.2 U.S. attempts to build a security system for the Persian Gulf	8
	1.2.3 Feature of the region after U.S. attack of Iraq	10
	1.3 Problem statement	12
	1.4 Research aims and Objectives	13
	1.5 Research questions	14
	1.6 Significance of the study	14
	1.7 Scope and limitation of the study	18
	1.8 Theoretical Framework	19
	1.9 Definition of Terms	24
	1.9.1 Regional security	24
	1.9.2 Regional Security Complex (RSC)	25
	1.9.3 Balance of Power	26
	1.9.4 Persian Gulf	27
	1.9.5 Arab Gulf	27
	1.9.6 Unofficial policy	28
	1.9.7 Regime	29

1.10 Methodology	29
1.10.1 Research data collection methods	30
1.10.2 Research Designs and Methods	31
1.10.3 Sources of available Data	31
1.10.4 Techniques for collecting and analyzing data	32
<b>2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>34</b>
2.1 Introduction	34
2.2 Regional security	36
2.3 Evolving of the Persian Gulf Security Regimes	47
2.4 Alternative Security Frameworks for the Persian Gulf	56
2.5 Iran's Persian Gulf policy	64
2.6 Conclusion	67
<b>3 THE EVOLUTION OF THE U.S. POLICIES TOWARDS IRAN</b>	<b>69</b>
3.1 Introduction	69
3.2 Background	70
3.3 The Geography and Geopolitics of the Persian Gulf	71
3.3.1 The Persian Gulf Geographic Confines	73
3.3.2 Geopolitics of the Persian Gulf	75
3.3.3 Local Geography	76
3.3.4 Classification of the Persian Gulf states	79
3.4 Great Britain's presence in the Persian Gulf	80
3.5 British withdrawal from Persian Gulf	81
3.5.1 The American reactions to British withdrawal	83
3.5.2 Regional states reactions regarding British withdrawal	84
3.6 American arrival in the Persian Gulf	85
3.6.1 American policy objectives in Iran	86
3.6.2 The U.S. interests in the Persian Gulf	88
3.6.3 Reasons of American indirect presence after Britain withdrawal	90
3.7 The policy of Twin pillar by Nixon administration	92



3.7.1	Areas of cooperation between Iran and US	99
3.7.2	US military assistance to Iran	101
3.8	Carter Doctrine	104
3.8.1	USCENTCOM in the Persian Gulf region	109
3.9	The policy of Dual containment (the policy of Clinton's administration - Clinton's Doctrine)	111
3.9.1	Basic codes of the dual containment policy	114
3.9.2	Factors of supporting Dual Containment Policy	115
3.9.3	Implementation of the Dual containment policy toward Iran	117
3.9.4	Implementation of the Dual containment policy toward Iraq	119
3.10	Establishment of the [Persian] Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)	121
3.10.1	Introduction	121
3.10.2	Previous Efforts for cooperation and alliance	121
3.10.3	Declared and undeclared objectives of the GCC	123
3.10.4	The main concerns of GCC states regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran	125
3.10.5	Interaction between the GCC states and the U.S.	127
3.10.7	Military abilities of the GCC state	130
3.10.8	A turning point at Doha summit	133
3.11	Conclusion	135
<b>4</b>	<b>EVALUATION OF THE U.S. POLICIES IN PERSIAN GULF</b>	<b>136</b>
4.1	Introduction	136
4.2	Evaluation of the "Twin Pillars Policy"	137
4.3	Evaluation of the "Carter Doctrine"	139
4.4	Evaluation of the Regan Doctrine	143
4.5	Evaluation of the "George Herbert Walker Bush" Policy	146
4.6	Evaluation of the "Dual Containment Policy"	149
4.6.1	Evaluating the methods of containment	158
4.7	Evaluation of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) policy	159
4.8	evaluation of George W. Bush Policy	165
4.9	Islamic Republic of Iran's Policies towards the United States	174

4.9.1 The Khatami phenomenon and Iran's foreign policy	177
4.10 Conclusion	180
<b>5 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS</b>	<b>182</b>
5.1 Introduction	182
5.2 Securing the Persian Gulf as a neo-conservative thought	183
5.3 Schools of Thought about Iran	184
5.4 The Persian Gulf Remains as the World's Energy Supply	185
5.5 Dilemmas in U.S. Persian Gulf Policies	187
5.6 Regional Security Structures as Possible Options	192
5.6.1 Potential Models (samples) for the Persian Gulf	195
5.6.2 Parameters of Formulating a New Security Structure for the Region	197
5.6.3 Essential pre-structure for Security building in the Persian Gulf region	198
5.7 Interaction of the GCC Regarding Iran	199
5.7.1 GCC and the Iran-Iraq War	203
5.7.2 The difficulties facing GCC states	204
5.7.3 The American Congress and weapons sales to the GCC	205
5.8 Sources of Conflict in the Persian Gulf Region: Penetration and Resistance	207
5.9 Oil is the main interest but not the unique interest	208
5.10 Major Problem Regarding the U.S. in the Persian Gulf	209
5.11 Conclusion	214
<b>6 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS</b>	<b>215</b>
6.1 Introduction	215
6.2 Summary	215
6.3 Conclusion	219
6.3.1 GCC needs a new security arrangement	220
6.3.2 Mutual understanding of the U.S. and Iran	223
6.3.3 Disengaging from the region	225
6.3.4 The New Regional Security Arrangement	227

6.4 Implications (theory and practice)	232
6.5 Recommendation for future research	234

<b>REFERENCES</b>	236
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<b>BIODATA OF STUDENT</b>	254
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<b>LIST OF PUBLICATIONS</b>	255
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