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Sovereignty and Intervention in the Middle East:
From the Fall of the Ottoman Empire to the Arab Spring

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the Josef Korbel School of International Studies

University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Raslan Ibrahim

June 2014

Advisor: Professor Jack Donnelly

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ABSTRACT

This research provides an institutional explanation of the practices of external intervention in the Arab state system from the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1922 to the Arab Spring.

My explanation consists of two institutional variables: sovereignty and inter-state borders. I examine the changes in regional and international norms of sovereignty and their impact on the practices of external intervention in the Arab state system. I also examine the impact of the level of institutionalization of inter-state borders in the Arab World on the practices of external intervention. I argue that changes in regional and international norms of sovereignty and changes in the level of institutionalization of inter-state borders have constituted the significant variation over time in both the frequency and type of external intervention in the Arab state system from 1922 to the present.

My institutional explanation and findings seriously challenge the traditional accounts of sovereignty and intervention in the Arab World, including the cultural perspectives that emphasize the conflict between sovereignty, Arabism, and Islam, the constructivist accounts that emphasize the regional norm of pan-Arabism, the comparative politics explanations that focus on the domestic material power of the Arab state, the post-colonial perspectives that emphasize the artificiality of the Arab state, and

the realist accounts that focus on great powers and the regional distribution of power in the Middle East.

This research also contributes to International Relations Theory. I construct a new analytical framework to study the relations between sovereignty, borders, and intervention, combining theoretical elements from the fields of Role Theory, Social Constructivism, and Institutionalization. Methodologically, this research includes both quantitative and qualitative analysis. I conduct content analysis of official documents of Arab states and the Arab League, Arabic press documents, and Arab political thought. I also utilize quantitative data sets on international intervention.

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The Arab Spring and Sovereignty

The traditional rules of internal and external sovereignty in the Arab state system¹ (absolute supreme authority, non-intervention, mutual recognition, and territorial integrity), which were the hegemonic rules of the game for at least three decades, have been seriously contested since the eruption of the Arab Spring in 2011. The recent practices of popular uprising, civil war, transition to democracy, external intervention, threats to state's territorial integrity, non-recognition of ruling regimes and recognition of opposition groups, embody this change in the rules of sovereignty in the Arab state system.

It is too early to identify clearly the new rules of sovereignty because they have yet to reach their high level of institutionalization.² But the old rules of sovereignty are no longer the hegemonic rules of the game in the Arab state system. This change is one of

¹ Arab state system is the regional inter-state system in the Middle East and North Africa, whose members are the Arab states. Arab states are the countries that are member of the Arab League. Israel, Turkey and Iran are non-Arab states and thus they are not included in this research project. I use international system and international society interchangeably. International society is “a society composed solely of states and the international organizations formed by states; it excludes not only individuals and private groups, but also political organizations who are not states or are not composed of states” (Jackson and Rosberg 1982: 12-13; Bull 1977).

² “Level of institutionalization” is a common concept in sociology but not in IR. Berger and Luckmann (1967: 47-92), Huntington (1968), Powell and DiMaggio (1991), Tulbert and Zucker (1996), and Zucker (1977).

the major transformations in the structure of the Arab state system since its formation following the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1922.³

The traditional rule of absolute non-intervention, in particular, is seriously contested as evidenced in recent practices of intervention conducted by some Arab states and the Arab League in Syria and Libya. Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Jordan have been intervening in the Syrian civil war, providing military and economic aid to the Syrian opposition groups. The state of Lebanon is not intervening in the Syrian civil war but Hezbollah, which is a non-state actor that resides within the sovereign state of Lebanon, is intervening militarily inside the Syrian territories to help Bashar al-Assad regime to stay in power.⁴ The Arab League authorized and called for an international military intervention in Libya, which later conducted by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces, with participation of some Arab states. The Arab League also called upon the United Nations Security Council to send peacekeeping forces to Syria.⁵

The traditional rule of diplomatic recognition, regardless of domestic human rights conditions, is also seriously contested. In reaction to the mass atrocities in Syria, the Arab League ceased its diplomatic recognition of Assad regime as representative of the state of Syria. The Arab League imposed political and economic sanctions against Assad regime and even recognized the Syrian opposition as the formal representative of the Syrian people. Some Arab states even allowed the Syrian opposition to open

³ On the structure of political systems see Donnelly (2011; 2012).

⁴ Hezbollah's military intervention in Syria is an interesting case of military intervention by a non- state actor.

⁵ I elaborate more on the Arab Spring and practices of intervention and recognition in Chapter Eight.

embassies in their capitals. The Arab League conducted similar policies of diplomatic recognition against Gadhafi's Libya.

The current recognition practices in reaction to the mass atrocities in Libya and Syria are strikingly unprecedented in the Arab state system. This is the first time that the Arab League suspends one of its members for mass violation of human rights. The Arab states and the Arab League did not halt their diplomatic recognition or impose political sanctions against the regime of Hafez Assad in response to its massacre in the Syrian city of Hama in 1982. The Arab states were also relatively indifferent to Saddam Hussain's mass atrocities against the Kurds in Iraq and King Hussain's mass killings against the Palestinians during the "Black September" in 1970.

The rule of territorial integrity is also no longer perceived as natural, unquestionable fact in the Arab state system particularly in Syria and Iraq. Since the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq, the Kurdish minority has intensified its struggle for self-determination and independence, seriously challenging the territorial integrity of the state of Iraq. The territorial integrity of Syria is also under serious threat due to the Syrian civil war.

The idea of redrawing the international borders in the Middle East, which would have been unthinkable a few years ago, is perceived as a realistic possibility in political, academic and journalistic circles. In September 28, 2013 the New York Times published an article titled "Imagining a Remapped Middle East," expecting the disintegration of five Arab states (Syria, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia) into fourteen smaller states.

The Arab state system is also experiencing substantive changes in the rules of internal sovereignty. The popular uprisings in Bahrain, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen ended *absolute domestic sovereignty* in these state—“the right of a government not to be resisted by its people” (Dobos 2012:1).⁶ The transition process from absolute sovereignty to popular sovereignty, however, has yet to be successfully completed despite the collapse of the old political regimes.⁷ The military coup against a democratically elected president in Egypt in July 2013 vividly illustrates the difficulties in transforming absolute sovereignty into popular sovereignty.

To explain the current changes in the rules and practices of sovereignty, we need to understand the historical evolution of the rules and practices of sovereignty in the Arab state system.⁸ Understanding the historical development of sovereignty helps us to explain the present transformation of sovereignty. Furthermore, situating the Arab Spring within the history of sovereignty in the Arab World raises interesting puzzles and research questions, as we shall see below. The historical framework for the study of the

⁶ Absoluteness of sovereignty is also “a measure of the scope of the affairs over which a sovereign body governs within a particular territory...A holder of sovereignty need not be a sovereign over all matters” (Philpott 2001: 18-19).

⁷ In Bahrain and Syria, the popular uprisings have not succeeded in overthrowing the old ruling regimes.

⁸ To explain the current transformations in the Arab World, scholars have compared the Arab uprisings and their regional effects with parallel European revolutions in 1889, 1848, or even the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 (Springborg 2011). Other scholars compare the current transition processes in the Arab states to Chile and Argentina’s transition to democracy in 1980s and 1990s. These are indeed valuable comparisons for understanding the current changes in the Arab state system but this dissertation takes a different path that has yet to be explored. It looks at the history of the Arab state system itself to understand the current changes in its rules of sovereignty.

Arab Spring is also justified by the particular history of sovereignty in the Arab state system.

Back to the Future: Sovereignty After Empire

This is not the first time in which the Arab state system experience changes in internal and external sovereignty. The Arab state system did experience significant variations in the norms and practices of sovereignty in the past. This is not the first time the Arab state system suffer from the absence of hegemonic inter-subjective understandings of sovereignty. Following independence from great powers, the Arab state system also suffered from the absence of hegemonic inter-subjective understandings of sovereignty. The current conflicts on the rules of sovereignty are also not unprecedented. Arab states and societies did engage in previous conflicts over defining the rules of sovereignty.

In fact, the rules of absolute internal sovereignty, non-intervention, mutual recognition and territorial integrity became the hegemonic rules of the game in the Arab state system only around 1970s, almost sixty years after its formation following the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1922.

Between 1922 and 1960s, the Arab state system suffered from the absence of hegemonic inter-subjective rules of internal and external sovereignty. Competing understandings of sovereignty, instead of shared inter-subjective understandings of sovereignty, structured Arab politics. The Arab states and societies were engaged in conflicts on defining the hegemonic rules of internal and external sovereignty. The rules

of sovereignty, which are often assumed and taken for granted in International Relations literature,⁹ were actually the focal point of struggles in the Arab state system.

The practices of intervention, non-recognition, threats to territorial integrity, and internal resistance to supreme authority were in fact common practices in the Arab state system until 1960s. “The sovereign norm of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states was flouted with stunning and unapologetic regularity” in the Arab states system (Gause 1992: 448). Fred Halliday also asserts, “the predisposition of Middle Eastern states, more than in any other part of the world, to interfere in each other’s internal affairs...such a level of sustained intervention and interference... is on a scale unseen elsewhere in the world” (2009: 15-16).¹⁰

The Middle East¹¹ experienced the highest number of military interventions in the world during the Cold War. It was the target of 173 military interventions, accounted for 25.1% of total interventions in the world. The majority of interventionist acts took place before 1980 (Pickering and Kisangani 2009: 598). 70,000 Egyptian military troops intervened in Yemen’s civil war between 1962-1967 to mention only one single military intervention (Gause: 447-51; Sela 1998: 44-47).

The Arab state system also did not have shared hegemonic rules of diplomatic recognition. Following independence from great powers, Iraq and Jordan, under the rule

⁹ For a review of IR theories and sovereignty see Biersteker and Weber (1996).

¹⁰ Similarly, Roger Owen states, “there was a general disregard for borders and for national sovereignty when it came to trying to influence an Arab neighbour, to put pressure on it or to try to stop it from pressuring you. Over the years this has taken the form of direct military intervention, assassinations, kidnappings, bombings, sabotage, newspaper and radio campaigns, and support for the political opponents of rival regimes” (2004: 66).

¹¹ Notice the term Middle East includes also the non-Arab states in the region.

of the Hashemite dynasty, did not recognize the sovereignty of Syria, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia. Iraq did not recognize the sovereignty of Kuwait, and Syria did not recognize the sovereignty of Lebanon as evidenced in its rejection to open a Syrian embassy in Beirut. Egypt, under the rule of Gamal Abed al-Nasser, also did not regard the Arab monarchies as legitimate sovereigns.

The principle of territorial integrity was also non-hegemonic. The Hashemite dynasty in Iraq and Jordan relentlessly tried to impose their dynastic sovereignty over Saudi Arabia and Syria. By the late summer of 1957, Syria in particular was on the verge of disintegration as an organized political community (Gause 1992: 448; Seale 1986: 307). The history of Syria after independence is a “story... of a country courted, subverted, manipulated, intrigued against by almost everyone: Hashimites, Saudis, Egyptians, not to mention the Great Powers” (Seale 1986: xvi). The territorial integrity of Kuwait was also threatened by Iraq, which perceived Kuwait as part of its historical geography. Only the presence of British troops in Kuwait, supported by international norms, did deter Iraq from invading Kuwait in 1961. The territorial integrity of Lebanon was also in serious danger due to its civil war and external military interventions by Syria and Israel.

The Arab state system also suffered from unstable internal sovereignty until 1970s, as evidenced in high frequency of military coups. “In seven key Arab countries between 1939 and 1969, 41 military coups were attempted—23 of which were successful. Many of these were recurrent second or third coups” (Ben-Dor 1983: 146-147). “Syria experienced fifteen successful coups between 1949 and 1970. In 1949 alone, the year of Syrian independence, there were three successful coups” (Quinlivan 1999: 134).

“Between March 1949 (the first coup after World War II) and the end of 1980, fifty-five coups were attempted in Arab states—half of them successful” (133).

Only around 1970s did the rules of absolute internal supreme authority, mutual recognition, non-intervention, and territorial integrity become the hegemonic rules of the sovereignty in the Arab state system.¹² The hegemonic status of these rules of sovereignty is embodied in practices. The number of intervention acts, military coups, non-recognition acts and threats to territorial integrity declined significantly compared to the previous decades.

But these traditional rules of sovereignty, which became hegemonic only around 1970s, are contested again as vividly evidenced in the Arab Spring. The new practices of intervention, recognition, popular uprisings, and threats to territorial integrity embody the new wave of contestation over the rules of sovereignty. The Arab states and societies are engaging again in a new conflict on redefining the rules of internal and external sovereignty. The current structure of the Arab state system again lacks inter-subjective and hegemonic rules of internal and external sovereignty, resembling the structure of the Arab state system after independence from great powers. The above brief history of sovereignty brings us to the puzzle of this research project.

The Puzzle

The variation over time in the practices of sovereignty in the Arab state system from the fall of the Ottoman Empire to the Arab Spring is the puzzle of this research

¹² The relevant literature differs on the timing of the consolidation of state-territorial sovereignty in the Arab states system. Some argue it is the post 1967 war; others claim it is the post 1970s oil boom; while still other claims it is actually the post 1964. I address the alternative arguments in the literature review chapter.

project. Of course I cannot examine all of the above practices of sovereignty in one single research project for space limits. Instead I focus on one single external practice of sovereignty (intervention and non-intervention).

The significant variation over time in the practices of external intervention from the fall of Ottoman Empire to the Arab Spring is the puzzle of this research project. The qualitative and quantitative changes in the practices of external intervention in the Arab state system are the puzzle of this research. I aim to explain the variation in the number of the acts of external intervention as well as the changes in the type and meanings of these acts (Justification, purpose, and legitimacy of these acts).

Table 1

Practices of External Intervention in the Arab State System

Practices of External sovereignty	1922-1960s	1970s-2011	2011-Present
Intervention/non-intervention	High frequency of external intervention justified by national, dynastic, and geographical purposes	Low frequency of external intervention; Hegemonic rule of non-intervention	Increasing acts of external intervention justified by humanitarian purposes

Research Questions

- 1) Why was external intervention a common practice in the Arab state system after independence from great powers (1922-1960s)?
- 2) Why did non-intervention become hegemonic rule and practice in the Arab state system around 1970s?

- 3) Why has the Arab states system been experiencing new practices of external intervention since 2011?

Explanatory Variables: Two Constitutive-Institutional Variables

My explanation consists of two institutional variables: Inter-subjective understandings of sovereignty and level of institutionalization of interstate borders. The two institutional variables are *underlying causes* that determine the proneness of the Arab state system to practices of external intervention. The underlying causes are persistent over long period of time and they are different from proximate causes, which account for timing of specific acts. The causal effects of proximate causes, however, are heavily affected by the underlying causes (Miller 2007: 82-83).

This is a constitutive explanation. Constitutive accounts seek to establish the conditions of possibility for objects or events (Fearon & Wendt 2002). Constitutive causes fall into the category of *reasons for actions*, which is not the same as the mechanistic *causes of action* as understood by rationalist theories (Finnemore 2003: 14-15; Ruggie 1998: 869; Wendt 1998, 1999).¹³ For example, new understandings of sovereignty as popular sovereignty make possible (and in that sense cause) new intervention behavior (humanitarian intervention). Changes in territorial rules in the Arab state system also constitute changes in the proneness of the Arab state system to practices of external intervention. In the following I briefly introduce the two explanatory variables:¹⁴

¹³ See also Kurki (2006, 2008) on the concept of cause in IR.

¹⁴ I provide a detailed discussion of the explanatory variables in the “Analytical Framework” chapter.

Institution of Sovereignty in the Arab State System and International System

The content of the institution of sovereignty is neither fixed nor timeless. Sovereignty is a social institution of supreme authority whose content varies over time and across space (Barnett 2010; Biersteker and Weber 1996; Hall 1999; Jackson 1987; Philpott 2001; Reus-Smit 1999; Suganami 2007).¹⁵ Sovereignty is “a variable, practically constituted institution, its precise content and political implications varying with time and context” (Reus-Smit 2001: 538).¹⁶ “The meanings attached to sovereignty and the practices which follow from them [including intervention] are historically and geographically variable” (Weber 1995: 16). The conception of sovereignty does not even logically entail the principle of absolute non-intervention (Suganami 2007: 523-526).

Instead of imposing a fixed and timeless definition of sovereignty, I explore the inter-subjective understandings of sovereignty in the Arab state system and international system and examine their impact on the practices of intervention in the Arab state system.

I explore the inter-subjective understandings of sovereignty not only in the Arab state system but also in the international system. For, the Arab state system does not exist within an international vacuum. The international normative structure affects the legitimacy of the practices of intervention and non-intervention in the regional Arab state system. International norms also affect the international reactions to regional practices of

¹⁵ For a different perspective of sovereignty see Krasner (1999).

¹⁶ The literature on sovereignty in the Arab states system, however, adopts a constant, fixed, legal definition of sovereignty. But, as R.B.J. Walker puts it, “the very attempt to treat sovereignty as a matter of definition and legal principle encourages a certain amnesia about its historical and culturally specific character” (Walker: 1993: 116; quoted in Biersteker and Weber 1996: 2).

intervention. Exploring the norms of sovereignty in international system is also useful to avoid “Arab Exceptionalism” accounts.

Changes in inter-subjective understandings of sovereignty, I argue, constitute transformations in practices of external intervention. The behavioral patterns of external intervention (or non-intervention) are understood here as practices of sovereignty. They are patterns of behavior that embody inter-subjective understandings of sovereignty.¹⁷

I argue that the changes in the practices of intervention in the Arab state system are constituted by changes in the inter-subjective understandings of sovereignty in the Arab state system and international system.

Institution of Inter-State Borders

“Borders are a human institution” (Holsti 2004: 75-76). They are “institutions for organizing understandings about jurisdiction over territory” (Simmons 2005: 824). Borders are “sets of rules, compliance procedures, and moral and ethical behavioral norms designed to constrain behavior” (827). “International borders and the explicit demarcation of the exclusive territorial sovereignty that they imply are akin to a fundamental article in the “international constitution” of the modern state system” (827). I treat inter-state borders as institution. “An institutional perspective on borders suggests that borders coordinate the expectations and behavior of both international and domestic actors” (Carter and Goemans 2011: 282).

The level of institutionalization of international borders is a significant variable. Institutionalization of borders is a process that takes place over time (Drysdale and Blake

¹⁷ “Understandings of sovereignty” and “practices of sovereignty” are not the same even though they mutually constitute each other. See Chapter Four.

1985: 77). There are multiple factors that determine the level of institutionalization of borders, including the duration of the border's existence, technology, the ambiguity of the norms on borders, and whether the border is disputed or not (Carter and Goemans 2011; Gavrilis 2008; Kahler and Walter 2006; Murphy 2002; Simmons 2005; Vasques 1995).

International borders constitute practices of intervention when they suffer from low level of institutionalization. For, low level of institutionalization of the institution of international borders blurs the distinction between the “international” and “domestic” arenas (Nexon 2009: 22). Low level of institutionalization of international borders also enables internationalization of domestic disputes and the domestication of international conflicts, increasing mutual fear among neighboring states.

Conversely, high institutionalization of international borders reduces the acts of intervention.¹⁸ For, high level of institutionalization of international borders stabilizes expectations, sharpens the distinction between the domestic and the international and it also precludes the internalization of domestic conflicts and domestication of international conflicts. Mutually agreed upon borders also reduce *jurisdictional uncertainty*.¹⁹ “When [borders] are mutually accepted, they drastically reduce external challenges to a government's legitimate authority to create domestic institutions and policies within a clear physical domain” (Simmons 2005:827).

¹⁸ Vasques offers a similar explanation of territoriality and war: “Once borders are established and accepted by all concerned, the probability of war becomes very unlikely” (1995: 283).

¹⁹ “Jurisdictional uncertainty flows from ambiguity over whose rules—and what legal protections—apply to a particular transaction” (Simmons 2005: 828).

Argument in Brief

Changes in the dominant inter-subjective understandings of sovereignty and level of institutionalization of inter-state borders constitute the significant variation in the acts of intervention in the Arab state system from the fall of the Ottoman Empire to the present.

The Arab state system experienced high frequency of intervention from the fall of Ottoman Empire to 1960s because the dominant understandings of sovereignty in the Arab world were dynastic sovereignty and national sovereignty, not state-territorial sovereignty. The most frequent interveners during this period were Iraq and Jordan under the Hashemite dynasty (1922-1950s) and Egypt under Nasser (1950s-1960s). Their acts of intervention were constituted by their subjective understandings of sovereignty as dynastic sovereignty and national sovereignty respectively. Dynastic and national sovereignty prescribed behavioral roles to the states of Iraq, Jordan and Egypt that constituted and justified their acts of intervention in other Arab states.

At the international level, the norm of non-intervention was still in its emergence and diffusion stages; it did not reach the highest stage of “norm consolidation” during this period (Bull 1984). The international system in fact experienced high frequency of intervention during the same period. The international society did not impose strong structural constraints against acts of intervention. Thus, the Arab state system was not an exception to the international norms and practices of intervention, contrary to what commonly argued in Middle East area studies.

At the same time, the inter-state borders in the Arab state system suffered from low level of institutionalization because they were new borders. Territoriality was a new

political practice in the Arab state system. Territoriality was absent in both Political thought and practice in Islam. The combination of the two variables constituted the high frequency of intervention in the Arab state system between 1922 and 1960s.

The significant decline in the acts of intervention after 1960s was constituted by changes in the dominant inter-subjective understandings of sovereignty in the Arab state system. The Arab states distanced themselves from the national and dynastic understandings of sovereignty. Instead, they adopted state-territorial sovereignty as ordering principle of the Arab state system. The state-territorial sovereignty prescribed behavioral roles that respect the borders of the states and delegitimize the acts of external intervention. Internationally, the norms of non-intervention and absolute sovereignty reached their highest level of consolidation as evidenced in the international treaties as well as practices of great powers (Bull 1984; Zacher 2001). At the same time, the institution of inter-state border in the Arab world reached higher level of institutionalization comparing to the previous decades (Ajame 1978; Salame 1987). The changes in the two institutional variables constituted the significant decline in the practice of intervention in the Arab state system after 1960s.

The revival of the acts of intervention in the Arab state system during the Arab Spring is constituted by new inter-subjective understandings of sovereignty, contingent sovereignty, that challenge the legitimacy of the traditional principle of absolute state-territorial sovereignty and non-intervention. The new understanding of sovereignty constitutes new practices of intervention that are driven or strategically justified by humanitarian causes, which were unthinkable in the Arab state system in the past. Internationally, the international society adopted “sovereignty as responsibility” and

“Responsibility of Protect” as new international norms, providing international legitimacy and justification for the regional practices of intervention. The Arab states and Arab league have been strategically utilizing the new international norms of sovereignty to justify their intervention in Syria and Libya. At the same time, global forces, technology in particular, have reduced the robustness of interstate borders and their effectiveness in the Arab world, which intensified the security interdependence and vulnerability in the Arab state system. Consequently, the system is more prone to acts to external intervention.

Methodology and Research Design

I examine *patterns of behavior* of external intervention. The goal is to examine not specific acts of external intervention but general patterns of intervention.²⁰ The term external intervention is extremely elusive (Bull 1984; Little 1987; Finnemore 2003) and I will address this notion in more details in the analytical framework chapter.

To examine the impact of inter-subjective understandings of sovereignty on practices of intervention, I adopt the interpretive methodology. The interpretive approach allows us to explore the *justificatory framework* that links between the state’s self-understanding of sovereignty and the social practices of intervention/non-intervention in which the meanings of sovereignty are embedded (Reus Smit 1999: 10). “In offering justification for their intervention practices, diplomats of intervening states simultaneously assume the existence of norms regulating state practices and interpretive community that will judge intervention practices according with these norms” (Weber

²⁰ This approach is similar to Finnemore’s study on intervention (2003: 11). She studies patterns of intervention rather than specific acts of intervention.

1995: 5).²¹ To examine the robustness of the rules of territoriality I rely on political geography scholarship on the Middle East.

Case Study

The case study is the following Arab state sub-system: Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait and Egypt and Saudi Arabia. These countries were the original members of the Arab League²² and they were the most active in the debate on regional order in the Arab World (Barnett 1998: 16). Geographically, they belong to the Fertile Crescent sub-system except Saudi Arabia and Egypt. But the latter two states have been very involved in the politics of this sub-region. All of the above states are members of this strategic-sub-system (Buzan and Waever 2003; Lake and Morgan 1997; Solingen 1998).

This sub-system is also a “critical case study” because it is the focus of the alternative arguments on sovereignty and regional order in the Arab world: Realism (Ajami 1978/9; Walt 1987), Constructivism (Barnett 1998), cultural, and comparative politics accounts (Hudson 1979; Owen 2004; Sela 1998).²³ The time frame of this study is 1922-2014: The Arab states system from the fall of the Ottoman Empire to the present.

Theoretical and Policy Contributions

My institutional explanation and findings challenge the traditional accounts of sovereignty in the Arab World, including the cultural perspectives that emphasize the conflict between sovereignty, Arabism, and Islam, the constructivist approaches that

²¹ “Justification is literally an attempt to connect one’s action with standards of justice or, perhaps more generally, with standards with appropriate or acceptable behavior” (Finnemore 2003: 15).

²² Except Kuwait, which became independent in 1961. Yemen was also the original member of the Arab League but is not included in this research.

²³ I critically discuss the alternative arguments in the Literature Review Chapter.

emphasize non-state identities and the regional norm of pan-Arabism, the comparative politics explanations that focus on the domestic material power of the Arab state, the post-colonial perspectives that emphasize the artificiality of the Arab state, and the realist accounts that highlight the role of great powers and the regional distribution of power in the Middle East.²⁴

This is the first research project that considers sovereignty in the Arab state system as a variable and explores its variation and impact on the practices of intervention in the Arab World. The alternative accounts, on the other hand, impose a fixed, constant and ideal-type meaning of sovereignty. They also confuse sovereignty with autonomy and material power of the Arab state. Sovereignty, autonomy, and material power are three different things (Sorensen 1999, 2001; Thomson 1995).

This is also the first research that situates sovereignty and intervention in the Arab state system within the historical context of sovereignty and intervention in the international system. Knowing the changing practices of sovereignty in international system is an inescapable necessity for understanding changes in the practices of sovereignty and intervention in the regional Arab state system. Our understanding of sovereignty in the Arab state system after World War II, for example, is incomplete or even misleading if we ignore the actual norms and practices of sovereignty and intervention in the international system at the very same time. Also, our account of the Arab Spring is incomplete without serious attention to the new practices of sovereignty in the international system. The alternative accounts, on the other hand, ignore the

²⁴ I critically review the alternative arguments in the literature review chapter.

international system utterly or discuss only the role of great powers and polarity, neglecting the norms and practices of sovereignty and intervention in the international system.

This is a very timely research project situates the Arab Spring within the history of internal and external sovereignty in the Arab state system. Furthermore, I provide systemic analysis of acts of intervention in the Arab states system from 1922 to the present.

This study also contributes to International Relations literature on sovereignty, borders and intervention. I construct a new analytical framework for the study sovereignty, borders, and intervention, combining theoretical elements from the fields of Role Theory, Social Constructivism, and Institutionalization. This framework is also helpful for understanding institutional change and stability in general.

The study of sovereignty has important policy implications for current affairs in the Middle East and North Africa. Understanding sovereignty is necessary for successful processes of democratization that have followed the Arab Spring. Democratization requires changes in domestic understandings and practices of sovereignty. The regulative rules of democracy require the support of particular constitutive rules of sovereignty otherwise democratization efforts are doomed to fail.

Understanding sovereignty and its variations throughout history also helps us to design creative solutions to the contested issue of sovereignty in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Historical examples of shared sovereignty, dual sovereignty, hybrid sovereignty, contingent sovereignty, divided sovereignty, functional sovereignty and non-territorial

sovereignty, to mention only a few, could help us to design creative solutions to the problem of sovereignty in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter Two provides a critical review of the alternative accounts of state sovereignty and intervention in the Arab state system including domestic politics explanations, realism, constructivism, oil and economic interdependence, Islam, and international level explanations.

Part II introduces the analytical framework. It embeds the study of sovereignty within institutional analysis. Chapter Three provides a new analytical framework for the study of institutions in general. Chapter 4 focuses on the institution of sovereignty. This institutional analysis of sovereignty offers a new framework for the study of the relations between sovereignty, borders and intervention.

Part III examines sovereignty and intervention from the fall of the Ottoman Empire to 1960s. It is divided into two chapters. Chapter Five discusses sovereignty and intervention in the Arab state system between 1922 and 1950s. Chapter Six focuses on sovereignty and intervention in the Arab state system in 1950s and 1960s.

Part IV examines sovereignty and intervention since 1970s. Chapter Seven discusses sovereignty and intervention in Arab state system between 1970s and 2011. Chapter Eight examines sovereignty and intervention during the Arab Spring. In each chapter, I examine the impact of regional and international norms of sovereignty as well as level of institutionalization of inter-state borders on the practices of intervention in the Arab state system. Let's turn to the literature review chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Sovereignty and Intervention in the Arab State System after Empire: 1922-1980s

The issue of sovereignty in the Arab state system suffers from scant attention in International Relations and Middle East area studies. Only a few articles directly address the practices of sovereignty in the Arab World. But they also suffer from inadequate perspective of sovereignty. They impose a fixed and timeless definition of sovereignty without exploring the actual meaning of sovereignty embedded in the political practices in the Arab state system.

I will critically review the existing literature on sovereignty and intervention, after independence from great powers. I will critically review the following alternative accounts: domestic politics explanations, realism, constructivism, oil and economic interdependence, Islam, and international level explanations. In the conclusion, I will highlight the common shortcoming of these accounts.

Domestic Level Explanations

The explanatory accounts that fall under this category provide a bottom-up explanation of sovereignty and intervention in the Arab states system. These domestic explanations are also materialist; they explain state sovereignty by the material power of the Arab state.

According to these explanations, military coups and external intervention occurred in the Arab state system because of the weakness of the newly independent

Arab states. The new Arab states were too weak to defend their internal and external sovereignty. Therefore, they experienced high frequency of military coups and external intervention (Gause 1992: 456-462; Mufti 1996: 1-19; Sela 1998: 3-54).

The Arab states experienced external intervention and military coups also because they suffered from the lack legitimacy. The Arab states were perceived as artificial constructs and illegitimate entities created by the European great powers to divide the Arab nation (Miller 2008: 142-150). The Arab states suffered from illegitimacy also because of the incompatibility between the state and the nation in the Arab world as put by Michael Hudson, “legitimate authority is hard to develop within state structures whose boundaries are inherently incompatible with those of the nation” (1977: 6). The legitimacy problem enforced the ruling regimes to adopt the popular ideology of Pan-Arabism in order to legitimize themselves. But the ideology of Pan-Arabism, according to these accounts, legitimized interference in domestic affairs of other Arab states.

The weakness of the ruling regimes also enforced them to pursue Pan-Arab political unity programs, which were common following independence from great power. The unity plans were “defensive unionism” pursued to defend the ruling elite to defeat domestic foes.²⁵ As soon the ruling regimes became stronger they gave up on their political unity programs with other states.

Mufti Malik aptly capture this theme in the provocative title of his book

Sovereign Creations: Pan-Arabism and Political Order in Syria and Iraq:

²⁵ Mufti Malik identifies several reasons that make defensive unionism an attractive strategy for ruling elites trying to consolidate their power: 1) legitimacy; 2) justification for administrative reshuffles that neutralize opponents; 3) external support from the other members of the political union; 4) countering domestic opponents to pursue their own unity projects (Mufti 1996: 7-8).

There is an inverse relationship between the stability of a regime (the particular individual or collection of individuals in power at a given time) and the likelihood that it will consider ceding its country's sovereignty to more powerful foreign actors. It is the inability of ruling elites to consolidate their hold on power that has pushed them in a pan-Arab direction in search for legitimacy and support" (Mufti 1996: 2).

As soon as the ruling regimes consolidated their power and reduce domestic instability their interest in pursuing unity projects subsided. Thus, "the story of Pan-Arabism is the story of the emergence and consolidation of sovereignty and efficacious states in the Arab world (Mufti 1996: 2).

Only after 1970s, when the ruling regime became strong enough to protect their internal and external sovereignty, did the practices of intervention, military coups and unit plans decline in the Arab World. The Arab states became more powerful and "have acquired more carrots, with which to vest social interest in the state rather than its competitors, and more sticks, with which to confront enemies domestic and foreign" (Gause 1992: 457). This change in regime power made foreign policy based on pan-Arabism ideology more risky and costly. It also made the regimes less vulnerable to pressures of pan-Arabism generated from abroad (Gause 1992: 461).

The increasing power of the Arab state is also reflected in the significant decline in the number of military coups:

After the numerous coups of the 1950s and 1960s, no regime or ruling family was overthrown by force in the 1970s and 1980s, with the exception of that of President Numeiri of Sudan, who was ousted as a result of widespread popular (and army) opposition in 1985. Other enforced changes, like President Sadat's assassination in 1981 or President Bourguiba's deposition in 1987, did not lead to any basic change in the way each country was run...*the major reason for this durability lies in the growth of state power.* (Owen 2004: 63; italic added)

To support the above arguments, scholars have provided data on changes in the material power of the Arab states, including size of bureaucracy, armed forces and government expenditure as a percentage of Gross National Product (GDP). In Egypt, for example, the number of those who worked in the bureaucracy and public enterprises increased from some 350,000 employees in 1952/52 to over one million in 1965/6. By 1960, the Egyptian government employed about 33 percent of Egypt's non-agricultural labor force. The total number of armed forces (soldiers, sailors and airmen) increased from 80,000 in 1955/6 to about 180,000 in 1966 besides 90,000 paramilitary police. The government expenditure as proportion of the GDP also grew from 18.3 percent in 1954/5 to 55.7 percent in 1970 (including defense). The expansion of state expenditure is also reflected in the increasing size of the education system. The number of Egyptians who were enrolled in all types of education increased from 1,900,000 in 1953/4 to 4,500,000 in 1965/6 and the number reached 5,900,000 in 1972/3 (Owen: 2004: 24-26).

In Syria, the number of state employees reached 170,000 in 1975 compared to 34,000 in 1960. Twenty five percent of the urban employments were on the state payroll in 1975. The state expenditure as percentage of GDP increased from 26.2% in 1963 to 30.6% in 1968 to 49.4% in 1977 (Gause 1992: 460). In terms of education, the percentage of school age children enrolled in secondary schools increased to 48 percent in 1975 compared to 16 percent in 1960 (Owen 2004: 25-26).

Jordan also experienced expansion in the size of the state. The percentage of government employees was about 15 percent (59,000 employees) of the total labor force in 1982. The number of armed forces reached 70,000-100,000 in the same year. The government expenditure as percentage of GDP increased from 31.4% in 1959 to 51.9% in

1967 and 54.7% in 1973. The number of government employees in Kuwait increased from 22,073 in 1966 to 113,274 in 1976. In Saudi Arabia the public service employees increased from a few hundreds in 1950s to about 85,000 in 1970/1 (Owen 2004: 39).

Gause uses another indicator of state power: the number of armed forces per 1000 of total population. In Egypt, it increased from 3.5 in 1955 to 5.8 in 1967 and 8.9 in 1977. In Syria it raised from 6.4 in 1955 to 10.8 1967 and 29.4 in 1977. In Jordan, it increased from 16.4 in 1955 to 26.7 in 1967 and it reached 31.8 in 1977 (Gause 1992: 458).

Shortcomings

The above account is one of the most popular accounts of sovereignty, military coups and intervention in the Arab world but it suffers from the following pitfalls.

First, the above account overestimates the power of the Arab state after 1970s. The Arab state has been overstated in two ways, as explained by Ayubi (1995). First, the real power of the Arab state is overstated. The Arab state is a ‘fierce’ state that frequently relies on raw coercion to maintain itself. But it is not a ‘strong’ state for lacking Michael Mann’s “infrastructural power” and Antonio Gramsci’s ideological hegemony. Second, the power of the Arab state is overstated in the numbers of public officials, public expenditure, size of the security forces, bureaucracy etc. In this sense, overstating means “overstaffing” or “overdeveloped” (Ayubi 1995: 3).²⁶

²⁶ On the weakness of the Arab state since 1970 see also the review in Benjamin Miller (2007: 194, 198-199). The above account also assumes that the Arab state is a coherent entity with a single interest. Roger Owen challenged this assumption relying on evidence from Egypt, the most powerful Arab state at that time. Owen finds that at least part of the state’s apparent coherence is more a matter of presentation rather than of reality. We are enabled to observe the real power of the state only “when the veil of omnipotence created around itself by an authoritarian regime fell away to expose the bundle of competing, and often contradictory, interests that had always lain just behind” (Owen 2004: 38).

Although most Arab states are 'hard' states, and indeed many of them are 'fierce' states, few of them are really 'strong' state. Although they have large bureaucracies, mighty armies and harsh prisons, they are lamentably feeble when it comes to collecting taxes, winning wars or forging a really 'hegemonic' power block or an ideology that can carry the state beyond the coercive and 'corporative' level and into the moral and intellectual sphere (Ayubi 1995: xi).

The size of bureaucracy and security forces is not a necessary a measure of power.

Jackson convincingly illustrate this point in his discussion of the African state emphasizing that the size of bureaucracy is a sign of weakness rather than strength of the new African states (1990).

Notice also that none of above accounts did include data on poverty, unemployment and inequality in the Arab states after independence. These are important sources of state legitimacy and power, as evidenced in the current popular uprisings in the Arab World (Arab Spring). According to a World Bank report, the total labor force participation in the Middle East and North Africa region was 57.1% in 1950; 56.2% in 1960; 54.4% in 1970; and 54.5% in 1980. In other words, the labor force participation actually declined between 1950 and 1980 (World Bank 2004: 222).

These accounts also overlook the rise of political Islam after 1970s. The revival of political Islam after 1970s in fact reflects the continuity of Arab state illegitimacy and weakness. The end of Pan-Arabism was replaced by another transnational identity and movement, which also reflect the weakness and illegitimacy of the Arab state.

Furthermore, the argument that Arab states suffered from illegitimacy because they were artificially constructed by great powers should also be treated with caution. In his contribution to the edited volume *The Foundation of the Arab State* (1987), Iliya Harik convincingly argues that the Arab state system was not a pure creation of western

great powers. “Colonialism affected the boundaries of the Arab states, but it did not, with the exception of the Fertile Crescent, create them” (6). According to Harik,

The history of the eighteen Arab countries clearly shows not only that they are old societies but also old states. Except for three of them—Iraq, Syria and Jordan—they all go back to the nineteenth century or a much earlier. The traditional state should not be overlooked or dismissed because of a modern outlook or other biases. Those who ignore it do so because of a formalistic definition of the state, and/or because of their limited historical curiosity (21).

These fifteen Arab states “have within themselves the sources of their legitimacy...they have enjoyed legitimacy in terms of the values of their peoples and times” (22). The majority of the Arab states “were locally rooted and enjoyed legitimacy in the eyes of their people” and they “had recognizable boundaries, or at least a core territory whether their authority endured through the vicissitudes of time” (35). Harik argues the Arab nationalism activists and thinkers, who desired to create a single Pan-Arab state, exaggerated the colonial association of the Arab states to discredit and delegitimize the existing states (44).

Second, the link between state weakness and Arab political unity projects is also problematic. Mufti Malik argues that regime weakness was the driving force behind the Arab unity projects in Syria and Iraq. But there were many weak regimes in the rest of the Arab states but they did not pursue unity projects to protect themselves.

Actually only a few Arab states pursued political unity plans, and they were not weak states. The main supporter of Pan-Arabism ideology in 1950s and 1960s was Egypt under Nasser. But Egypt was relatively the strongest and most coherent Arab state with a long tradition of central administration and national identity (Miller 1997: 162). Also, the Hashemite dynasty in Iraq and Jordan, which were among the strongest Arab regimes

during the interwar period, were the main advocates of Pan-Arabism. The examples of Egypt and the Hashemite dynasty actually refute the connection between state weakness and pan-Arabism.

Notice also the European states, which are much more powerful and legitimate than Arab states, formed the European Union. The European experience in fact challenges the argument that the weakness of ruling regimes is the driving force behind regional political integration (Barnett 1998: 14-15).²⁷

Finally, the above accounts reduce the norms of sovereignty to the material power of the Arab states. They also confuse sovereignty with empirical statehood. But sovereignty and empirical statehood are two different things that cannot be reduced to each other. Sovereignty and state power are also two different things (Jackson 1990; Sorenson 1999, 2001; Thomson 1995).

Regional Level of Analysis

There are four different explanations that fall under this category: Realism, oil and economic interdependence, Islam, and Pan-Arabism.

²⁷ Mufti does not address the experience of the European Union. He refers only once to Karl Duetsch at the end the book's conclusion (262). Mufti Malik also confuses state power and national sovereignty with neorealism: he argues "the emergence of stronger state institutions in [Iraq and Syria] during the 1970s has indeed given rise to newer style of foreign policy, one aimed at securing and enhancing national sovereignty and thus one that conforms more and more closely to the behavior predicted by neorealists.... The transition from foreign policies driven primarily by internal consideration (a la Steven David) to foreign policies driven primarily by external considerations (a la Stephen Walt) mirrors the formation of stronger states in Iraq and Syria" (9). But "securing and enhancing state sovereignty" is not included in the neorealist view of national interest. And the most powerful states USA, Japan and EU countries are the most interdependent and integrated states—and their foreign policies do not follow the expectations of neorealism. The history of the State taught us that "stateness" and "national interest" should not be confused or conflated with practices of realism and realpolitik. National interest is socially constructed and its content does not necessarily fit the assumption and expectation of political realism (Barnett 1998: 14-15).

Realism

Political Realism is the most popular explanation of Middle East politics:

There is a widespread consensus among many analysts, both realists and non-realists, that the modern Middle East is the region that more than any other manifests the predictions of realism in the international system, as evidenced by the dominance of conflict and the recurrence of rivalries, arms races, competing alliances, great power interventions, crises, and wars. (Miller 2007: 130-131)

Realists explain political transformations in the Middle East by regional distribution of power. From the realist perspective, the decline of Egypt power after 1967 war led to decline of pan-Arabism, a revisionist ideology mobilized by Egypt to achieve regional hegemony, which in turn led to decline of acts of intervention. Shortly thereafter, the oil boom in 1970s led to the emergence of new regional power, Saudi Arabia. The latter formed a new regional order based on sovereignty-non-intervention instead of pan-Arabism (Telhami 1990; Walt 1987; Miller 2008).

But the realist account suffers from serious shortcomings. First, changes in the distribution of power in the Arab states system do not correlate with the decline of Pan-Arabism. “Shifts in the distribution of power are a poor predictor of this fundamental change in Arab politics” (Barnett 1998: 3-4). Realists also argue that the defeat of Arab states in 1967 war,²⁸ the defeat of Egypt in particular, caused the decline of Pan-Arabism

²⁸ The realist account of 1967 war has also been challenged. Michael Barnett, for example, claims that strategic interest, which what realists emphasize, is NOT what drove Egypt and Jordan to the 1967 war. Nasser “knowingly risked unwanted war with Israel to preserve his image as the leader of Arab nationalism... If ideologies such as Arab nationalism are simply instruments in state power, as realist content, why would Arab leaders sacrifice state power on the altar of Arab nationalism.” Nasser went to this war not for realist strategic interest but to save his image as leader of Pan-Arabism (Barnett 1998:3; see also Miller 2007: 183). King Hussain of Jordan also went to war with Israel not for strategic interests but for the sake of his image: “Political Legitimacy superseded any strategic considerations” in the Jordan way to 1967 war (Gerges 1994: 216; quoted in Miller 2007: 166).

but a similar defeat of the same Arab states in 1948 war actually increased the popularity of Pan-Arabism.²⁹

Realists also have difficulty to explain the prevalence of external intervention as a strategic tool of the state. Why did Arab states intervene frequently in each other affairs instead of adopting deterrence and balance of power politics? Realists have difficulty to explain the relationship between national interest and intervention in domestic affairs of other Arab states, including attempts of regime change (Gause 1992: 451-452; Miller 2008: 130-133). In addition, realists have difficulty to explain the lack of arms race among Arab states. Despite the rivalry among them, Arab states did not engage in arm race (Barnett 1998: 1-2).

Realists also fall short in explaining the political unity project among Arab states. They cannot convincingly explain how rational states voluntarily cede their sovereignty to another state as Syria and Iraq did in the in 1950s and 1960s (Mufti 1996).³⁰ Stephen Walt's *The Origins of Alliances* (1987) is a classic realist account of Middle Eastern politics. He provides a balance of threat theory, a modified version of Waltz' balance of power theory, which argues that states formed alliances in response to external threats, operationalized in terms of aggregate power, offensive power, geographic proximity, and

²⁹ On the relationship between war and change, see Robert Gilpin (1981).

³⁰ Another shortcoming in Walt's account is his reading of the Iraqi-Jordanian federation of February 14, 1958 as an instance of balancing against United Arab Republic. Barnett challenged Walt's reading of this event and he convincingly show that the Iraqi-Jordanian federation was an act of "impression management" for the sake of their image rather than an act of balancing. Mufti Malik also criticized Walt's account, arguing that domestic threat rather than external threat is what drove the Iraqi-Jordanian federation (Mufti 1996: 3-5; Barnett 1998: 2). Malik provide a powerful critique of neorealism inability to explain sovereignty violation and unity projects in the Arab states.

aggressive intentions. Walt, however, does not provide a convincing realist explanation of the *unity projects* that dominated inter-Arab politics. Walt does not even distinguish between formal unity agreements and alliances, viewing the distinction as simply a stylistic one. But political union is not even a bandwagon act (Mufti 1996).

Some Realists explain the instability in the Middle East by its multiple structure, the existence of more than two regional powers: Egypt, Iran, Israel, Turkey, Israel, pre-2003 Iraq, post 1970 Syria, and Saudi Arabia. But there are other regions with similar structure but they are peaceful such as Western Europe (Miller 2008: 132-133). The Middle East also illustrates the limits of material power, which is the focus of realism. In the Middle East, there is no correlation between military power and status of hegemony. Israel is the most powerful country in the region but it is not the regional hegemon. The Arab states do not even perceive Israel as equal partner because of the distinctive non-Arab identity of Israel (Ben-Dor 1983: 208-209; Miller 2007: 186).

The above limits of realism explanations led the prominent realist scholar Benjamin Miller to state that, “even though patterns of behavior and outcomes in the Middle East seem to conform to realist expectations about the dominance of international conflict, the key explanation is not based on realist factors such as distribution of capabilities in the region” (Miller 2008: 131).

Constructivism: The Myth of Sovereignty-Pan-Arabism Conflict

According to this account, the rules of sovereignty in the Arab state system (supreme authority and non-intervention) were frequently violated because of dominance of the norms of Pan-Arabism. The decline of pan-Arabism in 1970s, according to this account, caused the institutionalization of sovereignty in the Arab state system.

The norms of sovereignty were in conflict with the norms of pan-Arabism.

Raymond Hinnebusch, for example, emphasizes the “enduring rivalry between the norms of sovereignty and pan-Arabism,” whose

bottom line is that the embedding of a states system in a supra-state community build an enduring tension into the Arab system between the logic of sovereignty,³¹ in which each separate state, insecure amidst the anarchy of a states system, pursues its own interests and security, often against its Arab neighbours, and the counter norm which expects states sharing an Arab identity to act together for common interests. (as cited in Lawson 2006: 143)

Similarly, Stephen Krazner claims that pan-Arabism and sovereignty constitute “alternative structures” of international politics. Hendrik Spruyt also asserts that, “non-territorial forms of organization such as the city-league then or pan-Arabism today are logically at odds with sovereign statehood.”³² Michael Barnett also argues “an Arab nationalism that demanded territorial unification represented a direct challenge to the sovereign authority and territorial basis of Arab states” (as cited in Lawson 2006: 143).

This is one of the most popular explanations of Arab politics. Yet, it suffers from serious shortcoming. The process tracing that link Pan-Arabism with violations of the rules of sovereignty is not clearly stated. The relationship is either assumed or imposed but not explored. The above accounts also impose a distinctive meaning of Arab nationalism and a particular meaning of sovereignty without exploring their actual meanings in Arab political thought and practice.

Unsurprisingly, the prominent historian Roger Owen concludes his review of the literature on Arab nationalism by the following:

³¹ According to Hinnebusch’s statement, there is only one single logic of sovereignty but this is not accurate as evidenced in the history of sovereignty in international system.

³² But sovereignty is not inherently territorial.

Academic writing about the phenomenon of Arab nationalism and the movement for Arab unity has been unusually unsatisfactory. Although almost all authors acknowledge their power and importance, little effort is made to understand their development and to explain their role in Arab politics. For some Arab nationalism remains an ultimately “mysterious” force; for others it seems to be seen as so much a self-evident part of Middle Eastern life that it requires no further examination. The problem has been further compounded by the failure to distinguish properly between nationalism as a set of ideas and nationalism as a political movement, and by the interchangeable use of such terms as “unity”, “solidarity”, and “Pan-Arabism”, as though they all had more or less the same meaning. (Owen 1983: 16)

A very recent review of International Relations and Middle East area studies literature on sovereignty and pan-Arabism, comes to a similar conclusion, “the power of regional identity [Arabism] over state behavior, particularly its detractor from sovereignty, is not demonstrated but is rather assumed, as it is in much of the area studies literature on which [Michael] Barnett draws” (Ewan Stein 2012; 15).

In the following I will show that neither Arab nationalism theory nor Arab political unity projects are incompatible with sovereignty. I will also challenge the argument that Arab identity constituted violations of state sovereignty.

Arab nationalism theory and sovereignty. It is striking that the theory of Arab nationalism does not address the issue of sovereignty. It even overlooks the issue of the Arab state. Sati’ Al-Husri, the most prominent theoretician of Arab nationalism, does not address the issues of sovereignty and the state. In his obsession to prove the existence of the Arab nation, “Al-Husri certainly overlooked the state and its foundations” (Ayubi 1995: 139). The state is “a matter of indifference” in Al-Husri’s writings as put by Bassam Tibi (Ibid).

Even in the political writings of President Nasser and the Ba’th party in Syria and Iraq, who adopted Arab nationalism, the considerations of the state “has remained only

implicit and void of practical implications” (Ayubi: 140). Both the theory of Arab nationalism and the Pan-Arabism movement “have tended to regard matters of borders, populations, rights, market, and so on, as rather artificial or superficial details” (Ayubi: 21). Clement Moore (1971: 106) also asserts that “most Arab ideology is expressive rather than practical” and a Moroccan scholar describes Arab nationalism as “a kind of ‘identity-mania’: the eternal question is forever: ‘who we are?’ and very rarely ‘what are we going to do?’ and ‘how we can do?’” (Ayubi: 147).

“The neglect by Arab nationalist ideology to elaborate on the organization of the desired Arab state is one of the most important loopholes in the nationalist doctrine” (Korany 1987). Arab nationalism scholars did not even come to agreement whether Arab political unity requires strengthening or weakening the Arab territorial states (Ayubi: 148).

The doctrine of Pan-Arabism has remained, from its inception to the present time, basically language-centered and rather reluctant to take adequate account of other factors. Although the slogan of ‘unity’ has been invoked by most Arab nationalists, Arabism remains closer to a concept of a *kulturnation*, and has not been pushed far enough in the direction of a *staatsnation*: Arabism forms a cultural community and an emotional bond that can be invoked in the political arena, although it *has not been able to modify the practice of state sovereignty in any significant way*. (Ayubi: 146; emphasis added)

Political unity and sovereignty. Scholars often use political unity programs as an indicator of institutionalization of sovereignty in the Arab world. But contra to the this popular argument, Arab political unity projects were in fact compatible with the rules of sovereignty as long as the political unification is achieved by consent of all sovereign states involved in the unity project.

The compatibility between political unification and sovereignty is even acknowledged even by Michael Barnett himself:

Both sovereignty and pan-Arabism permit a range of behaviors that often overlap. For instance, because sovereignty allows for political unification, it is theoretically consistent with pan-Arabism's goal of political unification; neither the active nor abandoned search by Arab states for regional integration represent conclusive evidence of the institutionalization of sovereignty. (1995: 505-6)³³

The United Arab Republic, the political unity between Syria and Egypt, was NOT a violation of state sovereignty because it was achieved through consent between two sovereign states, Syria and Egypt. Studying the United Arab Republic [UAR], Fred Lawson concludes that "even the most fully articulated institutional expression of the broad doctrine of Pan-Arabism [UAR] turn out to have been compatible with, if not in fact predicted on, the principles of Westphalian sovereignty" (Lawson 2006: 144).

The existing literature also exaggerates the role of pan-Arabism in unity plans. Actually Pan-Arabism played a minor role in the political unity programs among Arab states. As Roger Owen asserts,

the major schemes for unity put forward during the inter-war period were the work *not* of any Pan-Arab political party or movement, but of a small handful of

³³ However, Barnett still uses the decline of political unity as indicator of institutionalization of sovereignty: "The dramatic downturn in the number of unification efforts suggests the institutionalization of sovereignty" (506). To justify his decision of including political unity as indicator of institutionalization of sovereignty, Barnett claims that "what matters, then, is not the attempt of integration per se but rather the meaning and motivation attributed to such actions." For him, the unification efforts were motivated by a belief in the Arab states' artificiality and lack of legitimacy. Therefore, "the decline in unification talks suggests a decreased belief in the artificiality of the Arab state...[and] provides an indirect indicator of both an increase in the Arab state's legitimacy and empirical sovereignty and/or a decrease in the luster of pan-Arab claims" (506). But the states that pursued political unity programs were The Hashemite dynasty in Iraq and Jordan in interwar period and Egypt under Nasser in the 1950s, which were relatively the most legitimate and strongest states in the system. Notice also different Arab states had different level of artificiality and legitimacy, which is often overlooked in the literature on Pan-Arabism.

rulers and their advisors anxious either to reunite the separate parts of Syria or to create an Iraqi-Syrian federation. (Owen 1983: 18; emphasis added)

During the interwar period, only Iraq and Jordan, under the rule of the House of Hashim, pursued unity plans but these plans were driven by dynastic principles rather than pan-Arabism. Even after World War II, the

practical attempts to dissolve political boundaries and to create larger political entities have generally been the work of *rulers and regimes*, many of whom were guided more by *dynastic ambition or sheer realpolitik* than by any strongly held belief in the basic tenets of *Arab nationalism*. (16; emphasis added)

All of the Arab political unity projects

envisaged an integrated political entity in which the member states retained sole responsibility for managing their internal affairs. At most, amalgamation would entail a unified foreign policy, particularly vis-à-vis the State of Israel and western industrial powers, along with close cooperation on economic matters (Ibid.).

The historian Philip Hitti succinctly summarized the different visions of Arab unity plans: “By union here we mean somewhat loose political association of independent states, a federation, or a confederation, of sovereign Arab units similar to the British Commonwealth of Nations minus the crown.” None of the visions of the Arab unity envision a hierarchical Arab state with one sovereign on the top (in Lawson 2006: 144).

This confusion over the relations between Pan-Arabism and sovereignty partly originates from misunderstandings over the meaning of “unity.” The word *Wehda* (unity) in Arabic refers to a large spectrum of relationships, including cooperation, coordination, unity of purpose, and solidarity. By *Wehda*, President Nasser meant “solidarity,” and *wahdat al-hadaf* “unity of purpose” (common goal), which is the common struggle against imperialism and Zionism. Nasser also referred to “unity of ranks” and “unity of action,” which means coordination and cooperation (Ben Dor 1983: 147-148).

Pan-Arabism is a justification not a cause of intervention. A careful reading of IR literature on sovereignty in the Arab world actually reveals that it reduces the effects of pan-Arabism to a social fact that “justifies” but does not “cause” intervention. For example, Michael Barnett argues that

Pan-Arabism encouraged instability of the Arab states system by providing Arab leaders with a *camouflage* for their intervention in each other’s domestic affairs. Such intrusions were not only inconsistent with the norm of sovereignty but clearly complicated the region’s search for rules of stability (1993: 288; emphasis added).

Elsewhere he also claims

Arabism frequently provided *opportunities* for Arab leaders to interfere in the domestic affairs of others as long as these intrusions were viewed as serving pan-Arabism ‘s goals. (1993: 287; emphasis added).

Gregory Gause also claims that “Transnational ideology [Arabism] *justifies* intervention” (Gause: 451; emphasis added).

Thus, according to Barnett and Gause, Pan-Arabism provided camouflage and justification for intervention. But providing justification and camouflage is different from the real causes of intervention. “Causes of intervention” and “justification of intervention” are two different things. To justify intervention does not mean “to cause intervention.” Thus, Pan-Arabism was NOT the real cause of intervention; it just justifies it. Furthermore, if Pan-Arabism only provided justification and camouflage to Arab leaders to interfere in each other’s domestic affairs, then Pan-Arabism could not be a “social role” as Barnett claims in the very same article. Social roles cannot be just tools for justification. Social roles constitute interests and have more effects on behavior than just providing justification for intervention.

Arab identity and sovereignty. Some scholars explain the violation of state sovereignty (intervention and military coups) through the rise and decline of Arab identity (Barnett 1998). Accordingly, the dominance of Arab identity caused violation of sovereignty whereas the decline of Arab identity caused the consolidation of state identity, which in turn caused institutionalization of sovereignty. As put by Barnett's argument on the institutionalization of sovereignty in the Arab world:

a dramatic development in Arab politics is the greater agreement among Arab states that regional order should be premised on the norms of sovereignty. And the emergence of sovereignty in this instance is descriptively and analytically connected to the rise of statist identities that are better able to compete with Arabism that generate alternative expectations. (Barnett 1998: 15)

This argument is based on the assumption that Arab identity was stronger than state identity until 1970s but “there is no reason to believe the Arabs constitute a more ‘natural’ nation than do Syrians, Iraqis or Egyptians” (Stein 2012: abstract). They provide no evidence to illustrate the strength of Arab and state identity in the Middle East.

Furthermore,

although the norms of Arab politics are asserted to develop ultimately because of Arab heritage, shared language or common history, these links are neither theorized nor substantiated, which results in a view of regional politics as sharply detached from the social milieus in which these norms supposedly arise (2).

Local nationalisms were actually strong already in 1930s. In the pre-1945 period, in spite of the so-called 'artificiality' of most of the Arab states, local nationalism (*wataniyya*) had become as strong as pan-Arabism (*qawmiyya*), and statehood had become a major attribute of the Arab system. Thus, the concept of the state (*raison d'etat*) took root in Middle Eastern politics long before the decline of pan-Arabism in the 1960s (Podeh 1998: 52).

Owen also emphasizes the strength of local identities and local nationalism during the interwar period. During the interwar period, “nationalist energies were now largely diverted into fighting more specifically local battles against the colonial powers” (Owen 1983: 18).

Prominent scholars also challenge the argument that Arab identity declined after 1960s. Hudson asserts that in 1970s “pan-Arab perspectives have not lost their salience. Arab nationalism remains a formidable legitimizing resource for kings and Presidents alike” (Hudson 1977: 6). Public Polls also shows that Pan-Arabism was still predominant identity among Arabs even in the 1980s (Korany: 53-55). According to public polls conducted in 1981 (6000 persons in ten Arab states), 78 percent of the respondents “contend that there exists a cultural unity defined as “the Arab Homeland,” whereas 22 percent doubt it” (Ben Dor 1983: 138).

To sum, neither the theory of Arab nationalism nor pan-Arabism (Arab political unity project) nor Arab identity caused intervention and military coups in the Arab state system. At the most, they provide justification but they were not the real causes of intervention and military coups in the Arab world. Thus, the conflict between Pan-Arabism and Sovereignty is a myth.

Oil and Economic Interdependence

According to this explanation, the oil boom in 1970s increased the economic interdependence among Arab states, which in turn caused the decline of revisionist policies, including external intervention. The oil revenues also helped the Arab states to impose their internal sovereignty, which reflected in the significant decline of military coups.

The economic interdependence made radical Arab states such as Egypt more dependent on the Arab oil states. They also become more vulnerable to the Arab oil states. As a result, they had to restrain their hegemonic ambitions and revisionist policies. Whereas Nasser could pursue regional hegemony and destabilize the regimes in the Arab Gulf states during the 1950s and 1960s with little concern for economic consequences, Anwar Sadat and Hosni Mubarak could not do the same in 1980s and 1990s.

Following the oil boom in 1970s, the Arab states become more interdependent in terms of labor migration and capital flow. The Non-oil Arab states such as Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and North Yemen supplied millions of workers to the oil countries. In early 1970s there were only about 648,000 Arabs working in other Arab states. The number of Arab workers in other Arab states reached to about 4 million in early 1980s. Two thirds of the labor force in Kuwait was Arabs from neighboring countries in 1980. The number of foreign Arab workers in Iraq was about one million in the same year. In mid 1980s, 48 percent of Saudi Arabia teachers were Arabs from neighboring countries. Three millions Egyptians were working in oil Arab countries in 1984. In addition to labor migration, the oil revolution increased the formal foreign aid of oil countries to non-oil Arab countries (Sela 1998: 23-27; Guese 1992: 462-464).

The increasing economic interdependence among Arab states also made the Arab states more vulnerable to the costs of revisionist policies in the region. During the Iraq-Kuwait war, for example, hundreds of thousands of Arab workers left Iraq alone. Kuwait and Saudi Arabia expelled thousands of Palestinian and Jordanian workers in revenge to Jordan and Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) support to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait.

This is an interesting explanation of consolidation of sovereignty and decline of military coups and external intervention after 1970s. But economic interdependence among Arab states actually declined in mid 1980s. In the first half of the 1980s, OPEC's total oil income fell by 50 percent, from \$261.2 billion in 1981 to \$131.5 billion in 1985. The Gulf countries earning actually declined by 66 percent during this period. As a result they reduced their aid programs by more than 50 percent from \$9.7 billion to \$3.9 billion during the first half of the 1980s. Qatar even stopped its foreign aid to Syria, Jordan and other Arab states. The Arab oil states investment in other Arab states was less than 5 percent (Sela 1998).

Despite the decline in oil revenues and economic interdependence in mid 1980s, the Arab states system did not experience revival of military coups and military intervention, which illustrate the limits of the above explanation. Furthermore, financial aid from Arab oil states to non-oil Arab states "became a constant source of bitterness in inter-Arab relations" (Sela 1998: 26-27). The aid was less than the needs of the recipient states and it was divided into installments so as to ensure the oil countries' effective control over the funds.

Liberal theories that seek to explain domestic and regional political orders by the existence or absence of democracy also fall short in explaining political order in the Arab states system. First, Liberal theories cannot explain the significant changes in regional political order in the Arab World despite the continuity of non-democratic regimes and weak regional organizations (the Arab League). Second, the constitutive rules and practices of sovereignty are beyond the scope of rationalist liberal theories, which by definition focus on regulative rules (Keohane 1998).

Islam

According to the cultural accounts, the political instability in the Arab world is the result of Islam, which perceive all Arab states as illegitimate, secular, artificial, and obstacles to the creation of Islamic state. These accounts are generally reductionist and timeless. They are unable to explain significant differences between Arab states despite their common culture or religion. These accounts also have difficulty to explain change in the Arab states system as they focus on continuity, not change, which is explained by constant religious values and principles. Thus, they have difficulty to explain the significant changes in the practices of sovereignty in the Arab world.³⁴

International Level of Analysis

Polarity and Great Powers

The explanations that fall under this category are mostly realist, focusing on great powers and international polarity. Gause (1992), for example, addresses the role of great power in the consolidation of sovereignty in the Arab states system as evidenced in their intervention in the region to support the ruling regimes. The United States, for example, sent its military troops to Lebanon in 1958 to protect the pro-Western government in Beirut from the revisionist policies of Nasser and his allies inside Lebanon. The U.S. military intervention included 15,000 troops on the ground, dozens of naval ships off the coast, and 11,000 sorties by naval aircraft that made frequent low-level flights over Beirut. The military intervention in Lebanon lasted three months without firing a shot, and the last American forces left on October 25, 1958.

³⁴ On critical perspectives of the cultural account see Halliday (2009: 16-17), Owen (2004: 19), and Gause 1992: 452)

Britain also sent troops to Jordan in July 17, 1958 to protect Jordan from the Iraqi Revolution that put an end to Hashemite regime in Iraq. Britain also sent troops to Kuwait to protect the territorial integrity of Kuwait from Iraq. And US air force troops were deployed in Saudi Arabia in 1962 following the Egyptian intervention in Yemen (Gause 1992: 455). Britain intervention in Egypt reached its peak with the ‘Tripartite Aggression’ (along with France, and Israel) on Egypt in 1956 (The Suez Crisis). There is no doubt that great powers played role in the regional order in the Arab world but their intervention has been supported by international norms. They mobilize international norms of sovereignty and territorial integrity to protect their allies in the Arab world.

International polarity, on the other hand, seems to have little impact on state sovereignty in the Arab states system. The consolidation of state sovereignty (understood as a decline of intervention and military coups) did not correlate with changes in the distribution of power at the international system. The transformation in internal and external sovereignty in the Arab world in 1970s occurred despite the continuity of the international bipolarity.

The 2011 Arab Spring also occurred despite the continuity of unipolarity in the international system. In the same vein, the realist Benjamin Miller also argues that “regional variations under post-Cold war unipolarity may suggest that the structure of the international system is indeterminate with regard to regional outcomes” (Miller 2007: 205).

It is striking that the existing literature that provide international explanation to Middle East regional politics overlook international norms and practices. The international society (Bull 1977) is overlooked in the alternative accounts (Miller 2007;

Halliday 2005; Gause 1992). The omission of international society is particularly striking given the fact that Middle East is “the most penetrated international relations subsystem in today’s world” (L.C. Brown 1984: 3-5; quoted in Miller 2008: 133). Great powers intervention in the Middle East, I argue, is largely influenced by the norms of international society.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I critically reviewed the alternative arguments and highlighted their shortcomings. Besides the specificities of each account addressed above, they share common problems.

First, the literature on state sovereignty in the Arab state system imposes a fixed and timeless definition of sovereignty. The literature does not explore the real meanings of sovereignty held by the Arab states themselves. To fill this gap, I explore the meanings of sovereignty in the Arab state system and international system and examine their impact on practices of intervention.³⁵

The existing literature also suffers from the absence of clear definition of intervention. Where do the authors draw the line between intervention and non-intervention? Do they refer to political, military, or economic intervention? Do they distinguish between acts of mere influence and acts of intervention?³⁶ Do they mean overt or covert intervention?

³⁵ For similar approaches on sovereignty see Finnemore (2004), Hall (1999), Weber (1995), and Briesker and Weber (1996).

³⁶ “Operationally an intervention must be distinguishable from the notion of influence. The problem in many respects comes from the entanglement of policies seeking to influence behavior from those attempting to intervene” (Regan 2000:9).

The absence of clear theoretical and operational definition is particularly misleading when we discuss concepts that are inherently elusive. And intervention is one of the most elusive concepts in international politics. “Intervention has a perplexing vagueness of meaning” (Winfield 1932: 236; quoted in Rosenau 1969:153), it “has always been and remains an imprecise and extremely ambiguous concept” (Little 1987: 49). Stanley Hoffman’s observation that “[t]he subject [of intervention] is practically the same as that of international politics in general from the beginning of time to the present,” clearly illustrates the absence of clear definitional boundaries that distinguish intervention from other practices (1984: 7). This conceptual challenge should be addressed otherwise it opens the door for a misleading confusion of intervention with other political practices. For example, “some analysts are inclined to term any foreign policy behavior as interventionary when a power tries to change the behavior of another power” (Schwarz in Little 1987: 49). Others even adopt Talleyrand’s remarks that “non-intervention is a metaphysical and political concept which means about the same as intervention” (Little: 49).

Fortunately, the problem of ambiguity is the beginning not the end of the story of intervention in IR discipline. Hedley Bull (1984), Martha Finnemore (2003), Richard Little (1975), Pearson and Baumann (1993), Pickering and Kisangani (2009), James Rosenau (1968, 1969), R.J. Vincent (1974), Hidemi Suganami (2007), and Cynthia Weber (1995) among others have provided useful insights and tools to address the conceptual challenges surrounding intervention but the literature on intervention in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) has overlooked the recent IR literature with high costs.

The confusion on what constitute sovereignty and intervention led to many imprecise explanations of the frequency of interventions in the Arab state system. For example, scholars often confuse political unity agreements between Arab states as violation of sovereignty. But political unity treaties do not constitute illegal intervention and violation of sovereignty if they are formed by consent of the member states. The political unity between Egypt and Syria in 1958 was not a violation of sovereignty because the United Arab Republic (the political unity between Syria and Egypt) was formed by consent of the governments of Syria and Egypt. The political unity between Iraq and Jordan in 1958, which was also formed by consent, was compatible with the rules of sovereignty and it did not constitute illegal intervention. Thus, political unity projects should not be seen as empirical evidence to measure institutionalization of sovereignty in the Arab world. Scholars have fallen in this conceptual trap because they overlook the elusive definitions of intervention and sovereignty.

The actual meaning (or meanings) of intervention hold by Arab states themselves are also missing in the literature. Yet interventions do not occur in vacuum but in domestic, regional and international normative contexts that give meanings to the deeds of intervention. Sovereignty and intervention are practices—deeds that embody shared inter-subjective knowledge—we cannot ignore the inter-subjective elements of sovereignty and intervention (Adler and Pouliot 2011).

The existing literature also strikingly ignores the international society; namely, international norms and practices. Yet, institutionalization of the rules of sovereignty and non-intervention in the Arab state system are at least partly constituted by the practices of sovereignty and intervention in the international system. We cannot ignore the

international society within which the Arab states are embedded. This knowledge is important in order to avoid the risk of immature orientalist and Arab exceptionalism explanations.

In the same vein, the literature does not explore the complex relationship between intervention and sovereignty. The relationship is anything but simple. Not every intervention is a violation of sovereignty. Practices of intervention and non-intervention actually constitute the meaning of sovereignty and vice versa (Biersteker and Weber 1996: 12-13). Different types of sovereignty (dynastic; national, or popular) constitute different patterns of interventions and vice versa.

Besides the definitional or conceptual problems, the existing literature lacks a systematic review of intervention in the Arab state system. From the above arguments we only know that intervention, whatever it means, was unusually common in the region. But this observation does not take us far enough.

The literature does not inform us about the total number of interventions in the Arab world and the changes in its frequency over time. There is also no cross regional comparison that allows us to observe the distinctive patterns of intervention in the Arab world. The literature does not even help us much to answer the following basic questions: Who intervene? Where they intervene (target)? How they intervene? And why they intervene? The literature does not tell us whether intervention practices were hostile or friendly, direct or indirect, unilateral or multilateral, legitimate or illegitimate, covert or overt, successful or failure. Do different Arab states involved in different types of intervention or they conduct similar types of intervention? What are the nature, purpose and patterns of intervention? Do they vary across states and over time? The current

literature does not answer these questions. In other words, the literature lacks a systematic classification of intervention practices in the Arab state system.

Finally, the literature is also limited in the period of time it covers—the Cold War. The Arab state system, however, has been going through substantive transformations since the end of the Cold War culminated in the ongoing wave of popular uprisings—the Arab Spring—with serious ramifications upon sovereignty and intervention. Most of the literature also overlooks the inter-war period when the Arab state system was formed. But the formation process of the Arab state system had significant impact on the subsequent evolution of the practices of sovereignty and intervention in the region. To fill this gap, I explore sovereignty and intervention in the Arab state system from the fall of the Ottoman Empire to the present time, including the Arab Spring.

PART II: ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

CHAPTER THREE: INSTITUTIONS: AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Institutions keep society from falling apart, provided that there is something to keep institutions from falling apart.

— Elster (1989: 147)

Sovereignty is a social institution of supreme authority. Therefore, we should embed the study of sovereignty within the framework of social institutions and institutional analysis. It is important to come back to the basics of institutions because some of the confusions over sovereignty result from disagreements on the meaning of institution itself.

The purpose of this chapter is to offer a clear definition of institution, an analytical framework for the study of institutions, including causes of institutional change, as well as sources of institutional power. I will apply this framework to the study of sovereignty and intervention in the following chapter.

Definitions of Institution in Social Science

There are multiple definitions of social institutions in IR in particular and social science in general. There is no consensus on the meaning of institutions. While there is broad consensus that sovereignty is an institution (Keohane 2002), there is much less consensus on the meaning of institution. Thus, it is important to offer clear definition and

analytical framework of institution because various approaches of institutions lead to different perspectives on sovereignty.

From the rationalist perspective, the neorealist John Mearsheimer defines institutions as “sets of rules that stipulate the ways in which states cooperate and compete with each other” (1994-5:8). The neoliberal intuitionist Robert Keohane defines institution as “persistent and connected sets of rules (formal and informal) that prescribe behavioral roles, constrain activity and shape expectations” (1989:3).³⁷ Both authors restrict institutions to regulative institutions, excluding constitutive ones from their definitions.

Keohane’s definition is the most common in IR although it suffers from some shortcomings. First, Keohane’s definition of institution is tautological for including the effects of institutions in the definition itself. In Keohane’s definition, compliance to institution is built into the definition of institution. But the behavioral outcome (prescribed roles, shaped expectations and constrained activity) that ought to be explained by institutions should not be part of the definition of institution but a matter of empirical test (Simmons and Martin 2001: 194). By doing so, Keohane limits the concept of institutions only to successful institutions (i.e. institutions that successfully constrain activity and shape expectations). But only if we exclude the behavioral outcomes (shaped expectations and constrained activity) from the definition of institution, we can differentiate between strong and weak institutions, discuss level of institutionalization as well as violation of institutions.

³⁷ “To be institutionalized, the rules must be durable and must prescribe behavioral roles for actors, besides constraining activity and shape expectations.” (Keohane 1988: 384).

Second, Keohane also restricts institutions to “persistent” rules, which implies that institutional change is unusual matter and institutional persistence is normal fact. But both institutional persistence and institutional change are outcomes as highlighted by contemporary institutional economists. “Approaches positing institutional persistence as a matter of fact, and then thinking of institutional change as unusual events will not be satisfactory. Both phenomena have to be analyzed as part of the same dynamic equilibrium framework” (Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2005: 463).

Finally, Keohane also includes “to shape expectations” and “to prescribe behavioral role” within the same definition, which is also redundant. “Behavioral role” is “behavioral expectation” so it is redundant to include “behavioral role” and “expectations” within the same definition.

From the IR constructivist camp, O. R. Young defines social institutions as “recognized practices consisting of easily identifiable roles, couples with collections of rules or conventions governing relations among the occupants of these roles (Young 1986: 107; Keohane 1998:384). The prominent English School scholar, Hidemi Suganami defines institution as

a cluster of social rules, conventions, usages, and practices: it is not a mere outwardly observable behavior–pattern but a set of conventional assumptions held prevalently among society-members to provide a framework for identifying what is the done thing and what is not in the appropriate circumstances. It connotes normativeness. It is to be distinguished from organizations such as NATO and UNO although these bodies come into existence through the working of institutions (1983: 2365).³⁸

³⁸ The primary concern of the institutionalist school (English School), according to Suganami is, “to enquire what common assumptions are held about how things are to be done in international relations by those who speak and act in the name of states and how these assumptions affect the maintenance of order at the international level. In other words, the school is engaged in a search for the institutional basis of international order. Hence the label institutionalists” (1983: 2365).

While constructivists' definitions are more inclusive than the rationalist ones, they also have some shortcomings. Suganami's definition, for example, is like a black box that includes a mix of stuff (rules, conventions, usages, practices, behavior pattern, and conventional assumptions) without addressing how they are related to each other. Suganami does not address how the "cluster" is organized as a whole. In other words, he does not address the structure of the institution—the relationships among the different elements that compose institution.³⁹ Constructivists also lack clear criteria of what constitute an institution. Even Hedley Bull "never gave a full definition of what constitutes an institution, nor does he set out criteria for inclusion into or exclusion from this category" (Buzan 2006: 78). Some constructivists (e.g. Sikkink 1991) define institution as "set of understandings", which also suffers from the same pitfalls as Bull and Suganami.

The school of historical institutionalism defines institutions as "formal organizations and informal rules and procedures that structure conduct." Peter Hall, in particular, defines institution as "the formal rules, compliance procedures, and standard operating practices that structure the relationship between individuals in various units of the polity and economy" (Thellen and Steinmo 1992: 2).

John Campbell offers a broader definition of institutions as "sets of formal and informal rules, monitoring and enforcement mechanisms, and systems of meanings that define the contexts within which people and organizations interact. They result in durable practices that are legitimated by widely held beliefs" (2004: 174). Notice that Campbell

³⁹ This problem is common in IR in general, rationalists and constructivists alike. For criticism of this perspective of institutions, see Campbell (2004).

regards practices as a consequence of institution whereas Suganami and Young see practices as part of the definition of institution.

Even the disciplines of Philosophy and Economics lack consensus on the meaning of institution. The philosopher John Rawls defines institution as:

A public system of rules which defines offices and positions with their rights and duties, powers and immunities, and the like. These rules specify certain forms of action as permissible, others as forbidden; and they provide for certain penalties and defenses, and so on, when violations occur ... An institution may be thought of in two ways: first as an abstract ...system of rules; and second, as the ...[realized] actions specified by these rules (Rawls 1971:55).

What I find particularly useful in Rawls's definition is the inclusion of social positions, which is excluded in IR definitions mentioned above. He also distinguishes between abstract rules and the practices.

The philosopher John Searle provides a different definition of institution as

any collectively accepted system of rules (procedures, practices) that enable us to create institutional facts. These rules typically have the form of *X counts as Y in C*, where an object, person, or state of affairs X is assigned a special status, the Y status, such that the new status enables the person or object to perform functions that it could not perform solely in virtue of its physical structure but requires as a necessary condition the assignment of the status. The creation of an institutional fact is, thus, the collective assignment of a status function (Searle 2005: 21-22).

Searle explicitly emphasizes the role of language in constructing institutions as he puts it, "instead of presupposing language and analyzing institutions, we have to analyze the role of language in the constitution of institution" (2005: 2). Both Rawls and Searle's definitions go beyond the regulative rules; they explicitly contain the constitutive dimensions of institutions.

In Economics, Olinor Ostrom defines institution as "prescriptions that human use to organize all forms of repetitive and structured interactions" (2005:3). Acknowledging

the disagreements on the definition of institution in social science, Ostrom decided to focus on one component of institution, social rules. She defines rules as “shared understandings by participants about enforced prescriptions concerning what actions (or outcomes) are *required, prohibited, or permitted* (2005: 18; *italic original*). “Well-understood and enforced rules operate so as to *rule out* some actions and *rule in* others” (Ibid.).

Ostrom also highlights the language character of institutions. “All rules are formulated in human language. As such, rules share problems of lack of clarity, misunderstandings, and change that typify any language-based phenomenon.”

The stability of rule-ordered actions is dependent upon the shared meaning assigned to words used to formulate a set of rules. If no shared meaning exists when a rule is formulated, confusion will exist about what actions are required, permitted, or forbidden. Regularities in action cannot result if those who must repeatedly interpret the meaning of a rule within action situation arrive at multiple interpretations...Even if shared meaning exists at the time of the acceptance of a rule, transformations in technology, in shared norms, and in circumstances more generally change the events to which rules apply (20).

The economist Douglass North offers a different definition, “institutions are the rules of the game in a society, or more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction...In consequence they structure incentives in human exchange, whether political, social, or economic” (1990:3). Ostrom and North’s definitions emphasize the regulative dimensions of institutions over the constitutive dimensions.

Finally, March and Olsen define institution as

a relatively enduring collection of rules and organized practices, embedded in structures of meaning and resources that are relatively invariant in the face of turnover of individuals and relatively resilient to the idiosyncratic preferences and expectations of individuals and changing external circumstances. (2009)

Common Shortcomings in the Literature on Institutions

The short review of definitions of institutions clearly illustrates the absence of clear consensus on the meaning of institution. “A lot of work [still] must be done on determining exactly what goes under the title of an “institution” (Plott 1979:160; in Ostrom 1986: 3). Thus, it is important to clearly define institution before discussing the institution of sovereignty. Different definitions of institution above could lead to different approaches to the study the particular institution of sovereignty. For example, Searl’s definition of institution leads to a particular perspective on sovereignty, which is very different from our perspective on sovereignty if we adopt Mearshiemer or Keohane’s definitions of institution.

Besides the definitional problem, the literature on institutions does not provide much help to conduct research on institutional change. “While institutional analysis has earned prominent place in contemporary social science, the vast literature that has accumulated provides us with precious little guidance in making sense of processes of institutional change” (Mahoney and Thelen 2010:2).

The current literature tends to perceive institution as undivided whole, limiting the capacity to identify different dimensions of institutional change. But “institutions are multidimensional entities” (Campbell 2004:174). Unpacking the multi-dimensional aspect of institution is important for the study of institutional change. “If we want to better identify patterns of institutional change and avoid mistaking one pattern for another, then specifying important institutional dimensions and mapping them over an appropriate time frame is important” (Campbell 2004: 61). Some dimensions of the

institution might change while others remain constant. Also, different elements of the institution might change at different time pace (Campbell 2004: 31-39).

Regarding institution as a black box or undivided coherent whole also overlooks endogenous causes of institutional change. Endogenous causes of institutional change result from interaction between the different elements that compose institution (Mahoney and Thelen 2010: 1-37). By not unpacking institutions, researchers restrict the causes of institutional change only to exogenous forces (outside the institution itself) (Ibid.)

The current literature on institutions also tends to regard institutions as discrete. There is tendency to study particular institutions as they operate in institutional vacuum, overlooking interactions between institutions as well as combined effects of institutions.

In the following section, I will offer a framework of institution that overcomes the above shortcomings in the literature. It includes the constitutive and regulative dimensions of institution, allows us to unpack institution into its components, which is helpful for the study of institutional change, and it also allows us to study interactions between institutions and their combined effects.

Social Institution: A New Definition and Framework

Social institution is a cluster of interconnected rules, roles, positions and practices. Rules, positions, roles, and practices are the four elements or dimensions of institution. They can also be seen as four levels of analysis of an institution.⁴⁰

For the purpose of this dissertation, I define social institution as *a set of connected (formal and informal) rules that define social positions, prescribe their behavioral roles,*

⁴⁰ Ostrom discusses levels of analysis of rules, not institution (1986: 17-21).

and state how these roles are performed on the ground (i.e. practices). Of course this definition exclude some dimensions that included in the above definitions but in my view these four elements are still the most fundamental ones and they are particularly useful for the study of sovereignty and change in sovereignty.

Social institutions perform the following four functions:

- 1) Defining social positions;
- 2) Stating how participants enter or leave social positions;
- 3) Prescribing the behavioral roles of the social positions--which actions participants in these positions are required, permitted, or forbidden to take;
- 4) Specifying how the social roles are performed on the ground (practices).⁴¹

Roles are “behavioral norms and expectations associated with social position” (Donnelly 2011: 11). They specify the rights, duties as well as permitted, required, and forbidden behavior of the occupants of social positions. *Institutional practices* are the realized patterns of behavior that are prescribed by the roles of the institution. Realized practices embody, act out and possibly reify the inter-subjective content of the institution (rules, positions, and roles).

Realized practices are the highest level of institutionalization of an institution. Realized practices are the realized patterns of behavior that are prescribed by the institution. But not all institutions reach this high stage of institutionalization. It is an empirical question whether institutions reach the stage of realized practices.

⁴¹ This aspect is discussed in Ostrom (1986: 5).

Not all patterns of behavior are institutional practices. Patterns of behavior become institutional practices only when they embody rules, roles, and positions of the institution (inter-subjective knowledge). The pattern of behavior of balance of power in Kenneth Waltz theory (1979), for example, is not institutional practice. But the pattern of behavior of balance of power in Hedley Bull's Anarchical Society is institutional practice (1977).

This definition includes constitutive and regulative dimensions of institution. It includes defining social positions (constitutive dimension) and prescribing behavioral roles (regulative dimension). This definition does not specify the origins of the institutions. They might be human-designed projects (which are the focus of rationalist theories) or they can evolve out of historical patterns of behavior, routines, and for granted assumptions (which is what Constructivists focus on). My definition of institution also allows the researcher to test empirically the impact of institution on the behavior and expectations of the actors instead of including institutional effects within the definition of the institution.

Unpacking the structure of the institution into rules, positions, roles and practices is also helpful for a more sophisticated research on *inter-subjectivity* of the institution. This definition allows us to explore the inter-subjectivity of the different elements of the institution (rules, position, roles, and practices). The level of inter-subjectivity may differ across the roles, rules, positions and practices of the institutions. For example, an institution might enjoy absolute shared meaning at the level of rules and positions but experience different interpretations at the level of roles and practices. The formal rules of the institution might be shared inter-subjective fact but the roles and practices of the

institution might not. Also, different institutions offer different degrees of discretion at the level of interpretation of behavioral roles and the level of enactment of roles (practices).⁴²

This definition is also helpful for studying institutional change. Accordingly, there are four dimensions of institutional change: rules, positions, roles, and practices. Not all elements of the institution change simultaneously. Changes in one dimension may or may not cause changes in the other. Rules can remain formally the same but the behavior expectations are interpreted and enacted in new ways. Also it might take time for changes in formal rules to be translated into changes in practices. And changes in roles do not necessarily cause changes in positions or formal rules. In contrast, IR rationalist and constructivist perspectives on institutions, which see institution as undivided whole, cannot account for this variation inside institutions.

This perspective on institutions also offers new insights on the relative power of agency and institution. Agency has more freedom for creativity and change at the levels of practices and roles. Institutional ambiguities at the level of role and practices “provide critical openings to creativity and agency” (Mahoney and Thelen 2010: 12). “The fact that rules are not just designed but also have to be applied and enforced, often by actors other than the designers, opens up space (as both an analytic and a practical matter) for change to occur in a rule’s implementation or enactment” (13).

⁴² Similarly, Donnelly (2013) unpacks the institution of human rights into principle, interpretation, and implementation. He argues that human rights are universal (which in my view he means universal inter-subjective fact) only at the principle level but less so at the levels of interpretation and implementation.

Change in institution could occur “in the “gaps” or “soft spots” between the rule and its behavioral interpretation [roles] or the rule and its practices” (14). “There is simply a great deal of “play” in the interpreted meaning of particular rules or in the way the rules are instantiated in practice” (11). Therefore, “Institutional stability ultimately depends not only on the continuity of the rules themselves but also on the ways in which those rules are instantiated in practice” and also on the interpretations and enactments of roles (13).

The relations between the four dimensions of institution (rules, positions, roles, and practices) are mutual, interconnected and interdependent. They are all equally important. Yet, we can still identify the structure of institution, for analytical purposes, as the following top-down relationship.

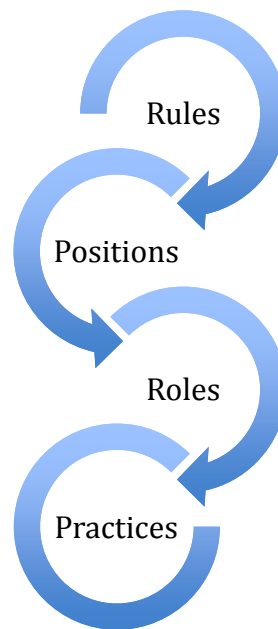


Figure 1: The structure of social institution.

This particular top-down structure is justified by the following relations between the elements of the institution. Patterns of behavior must embody inter-subjective

knowledge (rules, roles, and position) to be called practices. Otherwise it is just mechanical patterns of behavior. Also, practices are the performance of the roles. No practices without roles. Notice also that there are no roles without positions. Roles are behavioral expectations of social positions, so positions must exist before roles. Finally, there are no positions without rules that define these positions. But practices not only sustain but they also may change the above elements of the institution (roles, positions, and rules).

How do we see social institutions? The obvious indicators of institutions are the formal written ones but there are also the informal institutions. They can be seen

when actors make reference to them and orient their action around them. An informal institutional rule exists to the extent that actors refer to a rule when considering action, when justifying or legitimizing action, and when interpreting action...[And] there are the practices that are part of the institution and that also instantiate the rules (O'Mahoney 2013: 4).

Institutional change has multiple sources such as change in preferences and distribution of power. But in this dissertation, I focus on two institutional sources of Institutional change:

- 1) Endogenous sources of change: The interaction among the four elements of the institution (rules, positions, roles, and practices) is an endogenous source of change. For example, changes in practices could result from changes in roles. Or changes in roles could ultimately cause changes in positions and even rules. Changes occur in roles, rules, positions and practices. They do not have to be simultaneous or at the same pace. We should also distinguish between change in *level* of inter-subjectivity (level of shared understandings)

and *content* of inter-subjectivity: Change in the *degree* of shared understandings; and change in the *content* of what is shared.

2) Exogenous sources of change: The institution's *Complementary Institutions*.⁴³

This is an exogenous source of institutional change. Change in complementary institutions could cause changes in the focal institution. For example, change in territoriality affect territorial sovereignty (see below).

Sources of Institutional Power

There are multiple sources of institutional power but here I will focus on two sources that often either assumed or overlooked in the literature.

Inter-Subjectivity of the Institution

The power of social institution is a variable rather than constant. The level of inter-subjectivity of the institution is a major source of its power. The power of institution “relies on the dominance of particular shared understanding than simply control over military technology” (Klotz and Lynch 2007: 24). In order to pose effective constraints, the institution has to be inter-subjective social fact (shared meaning) (Ruggie 1998).⁴⁴ Institutions with low level of inter-subjectivity are less effective than institutions with high level of inter-subjectivity.

The level of inter-subjectivity is an important variable. It is not constant. Thus, we should explore the inter-subjectivity of institution empirically instead of assuming it.

⁴³ I address the concept “complementary institutions” below.

⁴⁴ Inter-subjectivity is also what Searle calls “collective intentionality” (2005:6).

Both the content of the institution and the level of inter-subjectivity of the institution are variables.

Researching the level of inter-subjectivity of institution is similar (but not identical) to Zacher's emergence, acceptance and consolidation stages of norms (Zacher 2001). It is also similar (but not identical) to Finnemore and Sikkink's the emergence, cascade and internalization stages of international norms (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998).

Investigating the level of inter-subjectivity of international institution is very important because there is a significant difference between violation of institution (at low level of inter-subjectivity or emergence stage) and violation of institution (at high level of inter-subjectivity or internalization stage). If we ignore Level of inter-subjectivity and assume all institutions are highly inter-subjective we ignore an interesting institutional explanation of violation and/or compliance with international institutions. Therefore, the research on intervention requires investigating the content and level of inter-subjectivity of sovereignty instead of assuming sovereignty. This suggests that both sovereignty and intervention must be empirically examined at the same time rather than assumed by the analyst.⁴⁵

Knowing the differences in the level of inter-subjectivity (including stages of emergence, cascade, and internalization) of various international norms could help us to explain why some norms are more violated than others. The relative level of inter-subjectivity of norms influence why some norms are more violated than others. States

⁴⁵ Most of IR and MENA literature on intervention, however, often start with assumption on ideal type of territorial sovereignty and ask why intervention occur and violate this ideal type. See Weber (1995: 17-29) for a critical review of IR literature on sovereignty and intervention.

prefer not to violate highly inter-subjective norms (at internalization stage) because the sanctions against violation are high. But the sanctions against violation of norms in their low level of inter-subjectivity (emergence stage) are relatively low.

The state's decision of which international norm to violate depends, *inter alia*, on the particular level of inter-subjectivity of international norms. The latter affect the legitimacy and the costs of violating particular norms. In other words, the relative level of inter-subjectivity of international institutions is a structural explanation of state violation of a particular institution. The choice of which institution or norm the state choose to violate is affected by the relative power of the norm (level of inter-subjectivity of the norm). As North puts it, "essential part of the functioning of institutions is the costliness of ascertaining violation and the severity of punishment" (North 1990: 4). The severity of punishment against violators of international norms depends, *inter alia*, on the level of inter-subjectivity of the norm (I use norms and institutions interchangeably because norm is a particular type of institution).

For example, After World War II the international sanctions against violating the norm of non-intervention are lower than the international sanctions against violating the norm of territorial integrity. In this sense, intervention is the lesser evil because the costs of the alternative actions (use of force and occupation of land) are higher. The norms of territorial integrity are harder to violate because they are more inter-subjective and more internalized.

Complementary Institutions

The power of institution is also contingent upon its complementarity institutions. "Two institutions can be said to be complementary if the presence (or efficiency) of one

increases the returns from (or efficiency of) the other...Conversely, two institutions can be said to be “substitutable” if the absence or inefficiency of one increases the returns to using the other (Hall and Soskice 2001: 17-18).

Institutions do not operate independently from each other; they exert combined influence on the state. The concept “complementary institutions” suggests

the importance of viewing norms not as individual “things” floating atomistically in some international social space but rather as part of a highly structured social context. It make more sense to think of a fabric of interlocking and interwoven norms rather than to think of individual norms concerning a specific issue...Change in one set of norms may open possibilities for, and even logically or ethically require changes in, other norms and practices. Without attending to these relationships, we will miss the larger picture (Finnemore 2003: 57).

Pierson and Skocpol (2002: 696) also emphasize the importance of hypothesizing “about the combined effects of institutions and processes rather than examining just one institution or process at a time.” Nobel Prize Laurite, The Late Elinor Ostrom, also emphasizes the importance of examining “how particular combination of rules affect actions and outcomes?” She warns us that if we do not understand how combinations of rules affect actions, “rule change may produce unexpected and, at times, disastrous outcomes” (2005: 7). North also addresses the relations between institutions and their impact on politics, ““when there is a radical change in the formal rules that makes them inconsistent with the existing informal constraints, there is unresolved tension between them that will lead to long run political instability (1990” 140)

In IR, Barry Buzan also calls upon his colleagues at the English School for researching relations between institutions:

Those classics in the English School that subordinate the exploration of tension among primary institutions to the concern for order, block one of the most interesting insights to be gained from the study of primary institutions: that

tensions among them are a key driving force in the evolution of interstate society (2004: 186).

Martha Finnemore also calls upon constructivists to seriously address the relations between different institutions and their combined effects on the international system: “Constructivists have not made an integrated argument about how the various norms in different areas fit together... Without such an argument about the content of a systemic social structure, constructivism cannot provide an alternative to systemic theories” (1996: 327). Finally, Robert Keohane also acknowledges the importance of addressing the relations between different institutions: “Values, norms and practices vary across cultures, and such variations will affect the efficacy of institutional arrangements... institutions that are consistent with culturally accepted practices are likely to entail lower transaction costs than those that conflict with those practices (1988: 389-90). He added, “Each set of institutions to be explained is viewed within an institutional as well as material context: prior institutions create incentives and constraints that affect the emergence or evolution of later ones” (1988: 390).

Despite the above assertion on the importance of researching the relations between institutions, IR had given scant attention to this important aspect of international politics. Instead, IR still tends to treat institutions as concrete and independent from each other.

Institutions and Behavior: The Theoretical Contributions of Social Roles

Roles have been received scant theoretical or empirical attention in IR even though they figure prominently in the definitions of institutions.⁴⁶ This is unfortunate omission of a very important concept in institutional analysis.

The sociologists have acknowledged the significance of the concept of role already in the mid of the twentieth century as asserted by the prominent sociologist Robert Merton in 1957 that “however much they differ in other respects, contemporary sociological theorists are largely at one in adopting the premise that social statuses and social roles comprise major building blocks of social structure” (Merton 1957: 110). But fifty years later IR theory has yet to adopt this important concept despite the acknowledgment of its importance by perhaps the two most famous IR theorists.

Alexander Wendt, for example, asserts that “the concept of “role” should be a key concept in structural theorizing about the international system” (Wendt 1999: 251). Even Kenneth Waltz emphasizes the importance of roles. In a meeting of a US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on the post-Cold War international affairs, Waltz acknowledges, “the old and new great powers will have to learn new roles and figure how to enact them on shifting stage. New roles are hard to learn, and actors easily strip when playing on unfamiliar sets” (quoted in Thies 2003:546).

Social Roles are very useful for understandings important dimensions of institutional stability and change. The concept of role sheds new lights on the above

⁴⁶ See, for example, Keohane and Young definitions of institution above.

issues of inter-subjectivity of the institution, institutional power, as well as the impact of roles on practices.

Role Acquisition

The process of role acquisition, for example, influences the level of inter-subjectivity of the institution, which in turn affects the stability and power of the institution.

Learning new roles and adjusting to them, is continuous, dynamic process rather than a one-step process. It is an episode that takes place over time (Kahn et al. 1964). It contains different stages of interaction between the role and its occupant. The process of role acquisition entails four stages: anticipatory, formal, informal, and personal. “A role is not fully acquired until an individual has anticipated it, learned anticipatory, formal and informal expectations comprised in it, formulated his own expectations, reacted and reconciled these various expectations, and accepted the final outcome” (Thornton and Nardi 1975: 873). This reflects the complexity that is inherited in the process of role acquisition. Formal recognition of the sovereignty of the Arab state, accordingly, is only one single, even early, step in the process of sovereign role acquisition.

The early stages of sovereign role acquisition could be causes of disorder because the behavioral expectations have yet to be internalized by the actor. “[A]ctors do not adopt new roles the first moment they interact in a new environment; some experience and time are needed before new roles are adopted” (Beyers 2005: 917). “Relatively new states will often have a difficult time trying to achieve roles as they enter the international system” (Thies 2010: 709). And “the role performance is generally more effective in the later stages than in the earlier ones” of role acquisition (Thornton and Nardi 1975: 883).

From this perspective of role acquisition, the ineffective performance of the sovereign role by the Arab states following independence is a “normal” situation for new states.

Unfortunately, IR and Middle East area studies adopt the

traditional approach to role acquisition that views it as synonymous with the acquisition of a new position in the social system. Role acquisition is thus considered a one step event whereby the individuals assume new social positions and conform immediately to the expectations consequently directed at them (Thornton and Nardi 1975: 870).

This view underestimates the destabilizing effects of role acquisition on inter-subjectivity, behavioral expectations, and order in the system. This traditional view also underestimates the complexity of role acquisition, especially the variance in role performance overtime (870-871).⁴⁷ It also conflates social positions with social roles, overlooking the interactions between the two.

Role Ambiguity

The concept of role ambiguity is also relevant to the above debate on inter-subjectivity and power of the institution. A role is ambiguous “when expectations within it are incomplete or insufficient to guide behavior” (Biddle 1979: 382). Van Sell, Brief and Schuler (1981: 44) offer a more detailed definition:

Role ambiguity has been defined as the degree to which clear information is lacking regarding (a) the expectations associated with a role, (b) methods for fulfilling known role expectations, and/or (c) the consequences of role performance (Craen, 1976; Khan et al., 1964). In other words, role ambiguity could possibly take one or all of the following forms: (a) information is unclear regarding which potential role expectation—A, B, or C—should be performed; (b) it is understood that expectation A should be met, but information is unclear

⁴⁷ The dynamic of role acquisition is also overlooked in IR agent/structure debate. Both IR constructivist and rationalist account of agent/structure are reductionist, or conflationist to use Margaret Archer’s term. They overlook the interplay between role and its occupant—overlooking the interplay between agent and structure.

regarding what behavior will in fact yield A; (c) the consequences of behavior A are unclear (Van Sell, Brief and Schuler: 50).

Most studies in sociology and psychology report a positive relationship between role ambiguity and tension or anxiety (Ibid.). Some roles are more ambiguous than others. The roles of sovereignty is one of the most ambiguous roles in international system. The ambiguity of the roles of sovereignty has significant effect on the “practices of sovereignty.” When the “roles of sovereignty” are ambiguous, it is unclear what constitutes “practice of sovereignty.”

The ambiguity of social role provides structural context that allows for different and even conflicting interpretation of the role and its enactment (practices). The ambiguity of social role allows states to strategically manipulate its meaning. For example, the ambiguity of the roles of sovereignty provided a structural opportunity for different interpretations of sovereignty in the Arab state system. Some states fused sovereignty with autonomy such as Syria under the Ba’th regime while others fused sovereignty with Arab unity such as Egypt under Nasser. Following independence, Saudi Arabia regarded strategic cooperation with the West as manifestations of its sovereignty while Syria and Egypt perceived strategic cooperation with the West as a violation of sovereignty. Egypt under Nasser argued that Arab unity was the only path to Arab sovereignty even though Arab states already enjoyed formal sovereignty. Jordan on the other hand, claimed that Arab unity is a violation of sovereignty or even an act of imperialism. The ambivalent content of the roles of sovereignty enabled conflicting interpretations of roles and practices of sovereignty in the Arab state system.

Role ambiguity has positive relationship with role conflict:

[F]orms of role ambiguity may exhibit a reciprocal causal relationship with dimensions of role conflict. Thus, even though role conflict and role ambiguity are conceptually distinguishable types of role stress, one should not expect their empirical indices necessarily to be unrelated. (Van Cell, Brief, and Schuler, 1981: 44)

Role Conflict

Role conflict affects the level of inter-subjectivity and power of the institution. It also affects the stability of the inter-subjectivity of the institution. “[R]ole conflict is problematic, because it disrupts the minimum predictability needed for interaction” (Stryker and Macke 1978: 71). “Role conflict is only one of several structural conditions that are thought to cause problems in social systems. Others have included *role ambiguity*...” (Biddle 1986: 83).

Role conflict is caused by the simultaneous occupancy of conflicting structural positions. The role expectations and norms associated with these positions are assumed invariant across situations and not easily modified because of their functional importance. (Stryker and Macke 1978: 70)

Role conflict exists

when there are contradictory expectations that attach to same position in a social relationship. Such expectations may call for incompatible performances; they may require that one hold two norms or values which logically call for opposing behaviors; or they may demand that one role necessitates the expenditure of time and energy such that it is difficult or impossible to carry out the obligation of another role. (Stryker, 1980:73)⁴⁸

⁴⁸ According to this view, each social position involves only one single role, and role conflict occurs as a result of simultaneous occupancy of conflicting social positions. But as Robert K. Merton argues, each social position could also involve an array of roles instead of one single role. Role-set refers to the complex of multiple roles associated with a single social status; “that complement of role-relationships in which persons are involved by virtue of occupying a particular social status” (Merton 1957: 110-111).

Role Socialization

The inter-subjectivity of the roles of sovereignty is also contingent upon the power of international society to socialize states to internalize the role of sovereignty.

Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann define socialization as “the comprehensive and consistent induction of an individual into the objective world of a society or sector of it” (1966: 130). For Stryker and Statham, “socialization is the generic term used to refer to the processes by which the newcomer—the infant, rookie, or trainee, for example—becomes incorporated into organized patterns of interaction” (1985: 325). David Armstrong defines socialization as the process “whereby an increasing entanglement within an existing structure of relationships brings about an increasing degree of adaptation to the normal behavior patterns of that structure” (Armstrong 1993: 7-8; quoted in Thies 2010: 694).

Socializing new states to internalize the role of sovereignty is a continuous process that takes place over time. The socializing power of international society is also variable. For example, the socializing power of the United Nations in 1945 is much less comparing to its socializing power in 1990s (Barnett and Finnemore 2004).

The above aspects of social roles illustrate the analytical benefits of unpacking institution. It also clearly shows how role-ambiguity, role-acquisition, role-conflict and role-socialization, affect the level of inter-subjectivity and in turn the power of institution. They also influence institutional stability and change.

Conclusion

This chapter offers a new analytical framework for the study of institutions. My framework includes analytical dimensions that have been overlooked in IR literature on

institution. It unpacks institutions into its elements and studies their relations; it takes seriously level of inter-subjectivity and institutional complementarity as sources of institutional power; and it also highlights the analytical advantages of social roles in the study of institutions.

Institutional analysis does not explain everything but at least an important part of social reality that we should not overlook:

whether institutions are strong or weak, substantial or nominal, we cannot understand behavior very adequately without making reference to them. Politics is to a very significant extent an activity of conceiving, making, accepting, changing, enforcing, defying, ignoring, evading, avoiding, and corrupting rule which seek to prescribe behavior. (Jackson and Rosberg 1986: 29)

The above analytical institutional framework provides important contributions to our understanding of international structure. First, the variables “level of inter-subjectivity”, “institutional complementarity”, and “role conflict” highlight the importance of addressing the relations between the different elements of the structure instead of assuming the structure as “perfectly integrated system, where every element was interdependent with every other” (Archer 1985: 334). Second, the variables level of institutionalization, role conflict, institutional complementarity, role ambiguity and role acquisition shed new light on structural causes of uncertainty that goes beyond the absence of government. They help to provide institutional analysis of uncertainty. Third, the concepts of role acquisition and role socialization contribute to better understanding of the mutual relations between agent and structure.

Structural analysis in IR would benefit significantly from the advanced literature on institutions. Both structural analysts and institutional analysts in IR would benefit significantly from their mutual cooperation.

In the next chapter, I will utilize only part of my institutional framework for the study the practices of intervention. I argue that patterns of intervention are practices of sovereignty. They are constituted by roles, rules, and positions of the institution of sovereignty. In addition, I also explain the impact of sovereignty's complementary institutions (territoriality) on intervention.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE INSTITUTION OF SOVEREIGNTY

Sovereignty: Definition and Institutional Framework

Sovereignty is a social institution that allocates jurisdictions of supreme authority in the international system. Sovereignty is connected sets of (formal and informal) rules that define social positions of supreme authority (sovereigns), prescribe the behavioral roles of the occupants of the positions of supreme authority, and state how these roles are performed on the ground (i.e. practices).

The institution of sovereignty:

- 1) Defines the positions of supreme authority (Who is the sovereign?)
- 2) States how does one enter or leave the position of supreme authority (How does one acquire the position of supreme authority? or leave it?)
- 3) Prescribes the social roles of the sovereign (What are the rights and duties of those holding the position of supreme authority? What are the required, permitted, and forbidden action of the sovereign?)
- 4) Specifies how the social roles, positions and rules prescribed by sovereignty are performed and embodied in the ground? (What are the practices of sovereignty?)⁴⁹

⁴⁹ This is similar but not identical to Philpot's three faces of authority (2001).

It is impossible to determine the domain of jurisdiction of supreme authority and to draw the line between domestic sovereignty and external sovereignty before knowing the historically contingent content of sovereignty (rules, positions, roles, and practices). What counts as internal sovereignty and external sovereignty *cannot* be defined prior to filling the historical content of the above four dimensions of the institution of sovereignty.

Sovereignty is not a timeless institution; its content is socially constructed (Philpott 2001; Hall 1999; Biersteker and Weber 1996; Reus-Smit 1999; Suganami 2007). “Sovereignty is a practical category whose empirical contents are not fixed but evolve in a way reflecting the active practical consensus among coreflective statesmen” (Richard Ashley in Reu-Smit 2001: 526). “States define the meaning of sovereignty through their engagement in practices” (Biersteker 2002: 157). Thus, “it is necessary to abandon the prevailing, highly categorical conceptions of sovereignty and to treat it instead as a variable, practically constituted institution” (Reus-Smit 2001: 526).⁵⁰

Sovereignty must not be confused with the state. State is an actor that has specific social roles designed to it by the institution of sovereignty (Biersteker and Weber 1996).

⁵⁰ Similarly, Weber also asserts that “while the word sovereignty denotes a state of being—an ontological status—sovereignty in fact expresses a characteristic way in which being or sovereign statehood may be inferred from doing or practice...to speak of the sovereign state at all requires one to engage in the political practice of stabilizing this concept’s meaning” (Weber 1995: 3). Kratochwil also defines sovereignty as sets of practices. Sovereignty “is not a thing but represent certain practices and actions, or rather the entitlement to certain practices and actions. Consequently, sovereignty cannot be conceptualized as a homogenous quantity or position.” Sovereignty, like democracy, does not refer to objects of the world out there. Neither democracy nor sovereignty “runs around like a black dog so that the only question remaining is whether it is a Labrador, black shepherd, or some other mutt. Even though the use of noun mistakenly suggests a similarity to designing objects, the only reference we can make out, after some reflection, is to *an assembly of practices and actions*” (Kratochwil 2008: 91).

Sovereignty “is an historically contingent social rather than an inherent quality of stateness” (Wendt and Friedheim 1996: 397).⁵¹

Furthermore, “sovereignty is never without an adjective” (Philpott 2001: 17).⁵²

Different (Types) of sovereignty differentiate polities differently. Different institutions of sovereignty constitute different domains of supreme jurisdictions. State-territorial, national, dynastic, popular, and absolute sovereignty, for example, differ across the above four dimensions of sovereignty: “If sovereignty is a shared set of understandings and expectations about the authority of the state and is reinforced by practices, then a change in sovereignty will come about by transforming understandings and practices” (Sikkink 1993: 414).

Unpacking the institution of sovereignty into rules, positions, roles, and practices is helpful for identifying nuanced changes in sovereignty. Change in sovereignty can occur in at least one of the following dimensions: rules of sovereignty; positions of sovereigns; roles of sovereigns; and practices of sovereigns.

For example, the impact of globalization on sovereignty can be addressed from the dimensions of practices, roles, positions, or rules. The impact of globalization on *roles* and *practices* of sovereignty has been more significant than globalization’s impact on *social positions* and *formal rules* of sovereignty. Globalization has not caused any

⁵¹ Sovereignty is not “*just a unit level factor, or a “property” of the units* which may be assumed to foster self-seeking of self-interested behavior.” The types of sovereignty are “collective identities whose development is contingent upon both domestic and international sources” (Hall 1999: 11-12). Sovereignty (dynasty, nation, territory, citizen etc) and the state (the institutional manifestation of sovereignty) should be ascribed equal ontological status (Hall 1999: 27-28).

⁵² “The organizing principle of sovereignty has never been a self-referential value”(Reus-smit 2001: 520).

significant change in the international formal *rules* of sovereignty but it definitely changed the economic *role* of the sovereign.

To some extent of exaggeration, the literature on sovereignty can be categorized according to its primary focus: roles, rules, position, and practice of supreme authority. For example, the literature on divisibility of sovereignty falls under the category of *positions of supreme authority*. This literature focuses on the distribution of the positions of supreme authority in the international system. The research on sovereignty in European Union also discusses the re-distribution of the positions of supreme authority in Europe. The relationship between great powers and colonial states also falls under this category of distribution of the positions of supreme authority. Jack Donnelly's discussion of "sovereign inequality" and "divisible sovereignty" at least partly falls under this category (2006).

The literature on humanitarian intervention and sovereignty falls under the category of the roles of sovereignty. For example, the emerging norm of "Responsibility to Protect" is about new behavioral expectations (behavioral roles) of both the individual sovereign states and the international community of sovereign states. The literature on sovereignty and decolonization, on the other hand, falls under the category of changes in *formal rules of sovereignty* as illustrated in Jackson's distinction between juridical sovereignty and empirical sovereignty (Jackson 1990). The literature on recognition and non-recognition, and intervention and non-intervention falls under the category of *practices of sovereignty* (Biersteker and Weber 1996; Weber 1995).

Of course the four dimensions of the institution of sovereignty (rules, positions, roles, and practices) are very interconnected. Yet, unpacking the four elements of

institution of sovereignty could increase our understandings of sovereignty and its variation over time.

Institutional Causes of Change in Sovereignty

Like any institution, there are multiple causes of change in sovereignty but in this dissertation I focus on two institutional causes of change:

- 1) Endogenous causes of change: Interaction among the rules, roles, positions, and practices of sovereignty. The interaction among the four elements of the institution of sovereignty is an important source of its stability and change. The interaction among the elements of the institution of sovereignty should not be assumed but examined. For examples, changes in the roles of sovereignty could cause changes in practices of sovereignty. Changes in position of supreme authority could also constitute changes in the roles and practices of sovereignty and vice versa.
- 2) Exogenous causes of change: change in sovereignty's complementary institutions: sovereignty does not exist in institutional vacuum. Changes in complementary institution can cause changes in sovereignty. For example, territorial sovereignty is contingent upon the institution of inter-state borders. Changes in territoriality cause changes in territorial sovereignty. Popular sovereignty is contingent upon institutional rules. Replacing institutional rules with personal rules makes it impossible for popular sovereignty to function. Sovereignty is not a discrete institution (Reus-Smit 2001). Sovereignty's complementary institutions even constitute at least some of the content of the institution of sovereignty.

Change in sovereignty occurs not only in the *content* of sovereignty (content of rules, practices, roles, and positions) but also in the *level* of shared understandings of sovereignty. For example in post-World War II, the Arab states did not share the same understandings of the roles of sovereignty. There was conflict on the meanings of the roles of sovereignty. Only around 1980 the Arab states did adopt shared inter-subjective understandings of the roles of state-territorial sovereignty. The level of shared understandings of sovereignty is a variable and should not be imposed by the researcher.

The Institutional Power of Sovereignty

The institutional power of sovereignty is also a variable. The power of sovereignty is contingent upon its level of inter-subjectivity as well as the effectiveness of its complementarity institutions.

Inter-Subjectivity of Sovereignty

The institutional power of any type of sovereignty relies on its level of inter-subjectivity. Changes in the level of inter-subjectivity of sovereignty affect its institutional power. Sovereignty does not effectively bind states when it is not inter-subjective or suffer from low level of inter-subjectivity.

Researchers, however, often assume (or impose) an ideal type of inter-subjective sovereignty and ask why it is violated by external intervention. But sovereignty is not necessarily always an inter-subjective social fact. The level of inter-subjectivity of sovereignty (like any institution) is a variable. Thus, we should explore the level of inter-subjectivity of sovereignty empirically instead of assuming it. Both the *content* and the

level of inter-subjectivity of sovereignty are variables. The stability or instability of inter-subjective understandings of sovereignty is also a variable (Klotz and Lynch 2007: 13).⁵³

Constructivists assert “there can be no mutually comprehensible conduct of international relations... without mutually recognized constitutive rules resting on collective intentionality” (Ruggie 1998: 880):

The mutual recognition of sovereignty... is a precondition for the normal functioning of a system of sovereign states. Sovereignty, like money or property rights, exists only within a framework of shared meaning that recognize it to be valid—that is, by virtue of collective intentionality. (Ruggie 1998: 870)

But the “collective intentionality” of sovereignty or the inter-subjectivity of sovereignty is an empirical issue and should not be assumed by the researcher. When there is no shared meaning on sovereignty, the international system is very unstable. For, “constitutive rules [including sovereignty] are the institutional foundation of all social life. No consciously organized realm of human activity is imaginable without them... But their durability remains based in collective intentionality” (873).

Therefore, to explain the practices of intervention in the Arab state system we must explore both the content of the institution of sovereignty and its level of inter-subjectivity. Both the content and level of inter-subjectivity of sovereignty are variables that affect the practices of intervention and non-intervention in international and regional systems.

⁵³ Constructivism contributed significantly to our understanding of how inter-subjective social facts affect behavior. But constructivists have done little contribution on “the concrete processes whereby individual elements, including ideas, are transformed to become social facts” Ruggie 1998: 858). They do not offer much help to understand the rise and decline of inter-subjectivity. How inter-subjective social facts emerge, consolidate and decline has yet to receive enough attention in constructivism research project.

Sovereignty's Complementary Institutions: Borders

The institutional power of any type of sovereignty is also contingent upon its complementary institutions. Sovereignty does not operate in a vacuum but within an institutional context that has influence on its binding power. In the contemporary international society, for example, the effectiveness of territorial sovereignty is contingent upon its complementary institution: inter-state borders.

“Borders are a human institution” (Holsti 2004: 75-76). They are “institutions for organizing understandings about jurisdiction over territory” (Simmons 2005: 824). Borders are “sets of rules, compliance procedures, and moral and ethical behavioral norms designed to constrain behavior” (827). “International borders and the explicit demarcation of the exclusive territorial sovereignty that they imply are akin to a fundamental article in the “international constitution” of the modern state system” (827). “An institutional perspective on borders suggests that borders coordinate the expectations and behavior of both international and domestic actors” (Carter and Goemans 2011: 282).

Searle also sees borders as an institution. He convincingly claims that international border functions not merely in virtue of its physical structure (line of stones as example),

but in virtue of the fact that the people involved continue to accept the line of stones as having a certain status. It has the status of boundary... the line of stones has a function not in virtue of its physical structure, but in virtue of the collective assignment of a status [of boundary] (Searle 2005:8)

The level of institutionalization of international border is a variable.

Institutionalization of borders is a process that takes place over time. A new border is unlikely to stabilize expectations overnight (Carter and Goemans 2011: 284). “Interstate

boundaries tend to evolve through various stages to reach full maturity...A fully mature boundary is one recognized by both parties, is demarcated, and is effectively administered and maintained” (Drysdale and Blake 1985: 77).

There are many factors that determine the level of institutionalization of the institution of borders including the age of border (whether border is new or not), whether the border is disputed or not, technology, the ambiguity of the norms of borders,⁵⁴ how the borders are originally drawn; and whether they are compatible with prior administrative frontiers (Carter and Goemans 2011; Murphy 1990; Simmons 2005; Vasques 1995).

High level of institutionalization of inter-state borders enhances the effectiveness of territorial sovereignty. But inter-state borders, when they are weak, reduce the effectiveness of territorial sovereignty. Low level of institutionalization of inter-state borders, furthermore, constitutes a particular type of state—composite state—rather than unitary state. Composite state lacks the extensive domestic integration and the strong international boundaries. System of composite states constitutes a particular practice of sovereignty that is different from systems of unitary states. Composite states also “produces distinctive patterns of collective action and collective mobilization from those associated with states-under-anarchy framework” (Nexon 2009: 16). This point also illustrates the interconnection between territorial sovereignty and borders.

⁵⁴ Vasques addresses the ambiguities of norms on borders and war and his explanation is applicable to intervention as well: “A shift in norms governing territory should lead to wars as states raise territorial issues on the basis of the new norms and demand transfers. Likewise, the more ambiguous norms are, the more wars; the less ambiguous, the few wars” (288).

The concepts “institutional complementarity” and institutions of inter-state borders are particularly relevant to the globalization-sovereignty debate. Global forces has affected state-territorial sovereignty by changing its complementarity institution—territoriality (Elden 2009; Kahler and Walter 2006). Territoriality is a process tracing that links globalization with sovereignty.

Sovereignty and Intervention

The concept of sovereignty does not logically entails the principle of absolute non-intervention (Suganami 2007: 523-526). “The meanings attached to sovereignty and the practices which follow from them [including intervention and non-intervention] are historically and geographically variable” (Weber 1995: 16).⁵⁵

Different understandings (types) of sovereignty constitute different meanings and practices of intervention and non-intervention. Different types of sovereignty draw different lines between intervention and non-intervention. The meaning and practices of intervention and non-intervention in a system of *territorial* sovereignty are different from the meaning and practices of intervention and non-intervention in a system of *national* sovereignty, *dynastic* sovereignty, or *popular* sovereignty.⁵⁶

“In the most fundamental way, intervention policies [also] define sovereignty and the state” (Finnemore 2003: 7). They “raise the very question of sovereignty. Intervention

⁵⁵ The literature on sovereignty in the Arab state system, however, adopts a constant, fixed, legal definition of sovereignty. But, as R.B.J. Walker puts it, “the very attempt to treat sovereignty as a matter of definition and legal principle encourages a certain amnesia about its historical and culturally specific character” (Walker: 1993: 116; quoted in Biersteker and Weber 1996: 2).

⁵⁶ Rodney Bruce Hall provides convincing empirical evidence showing how “the international system of national-sovereign actors is in many ways, though not in every aspect, an essentially different system from the territorial-sovereign system” (1999: 12).

practices participate in stabilizing the meaning of sovereignty” (Weber 1995: 4). For example, “the refusal of some states to intervene in “civil” wars of others is one way in which intervention (or non-intervention, in this case) serves to define the meaning of sovereignty” (Biersteker and Weber 1996: 12-13). The meaning of sovereignty and intervention, as well their relationship are historically and socially contingent. Therefore, “one must refuse to position oneself outside of history with respect to questions of sovereign statehood and intervention” (Weber 1995: 9).

The type of sovereignty influences the *practice of intervention* through the *behavioral roles* it prescribes to the state in the system. Different types of sovereignty prescribe different behavioral roles to the states because they provide different answers to the following questions: Who is the sovereign? What is the legitimating principle⁵⁷ of the sovereign, and what is the social purpose⁵⁸ of the sovereign?⁵⁹ National, dynastic, state-territorial, popular and geographical sovereignty⁶⁰ answer these questions differently as we see in the following table:

⁵⁷ Legitimizing principles are the principles that legitimate the holder of sovereignty. “The sovereign is the person, institution, or community in which legitimate social authority is lodged in accordance with the legitimating principles of the social order” (Hall 1999: 31). The principles that legitimate sovereignty are the principles that legitimate the social order that provides an inter-subjective social meaning to sovereignty (Hall: 43). The legitimating principle informs us on how sovereignty has been justified.

⁵⁸ The social purpose refers to the “reasons” of the state. Social purpose is similar what Reus-Smit calls “moral purpose of the state”(1999: 31-33) Ruggie also discuss the concept of social purpose in his analysis of embedded liberalism (1983).

⁵⁹ The three questions fill content of sovereignty. “Sovereignty has no purposive content. Without reference to some other higher-order values it cannot independently inform plans of action or strategies to achieve them. Furthermore, the principle of sovereignty provides an inadequate justificatory basis for action” (Reus-Smit 1999: 30).

⁶⁰ These five types of sovereignty are the most relevant to the Arab states system. There are other types of sovereignty. Krasner (1999), for example, offers a different typology of sovereignty:

Table 2

Types of Sovereignty

Sovereignty	The holder of sovereignty	The legitimating principle of the sovereign	The social purpose of the sovereign	Inside/Outside Differentiation⁶¹
Dynastic	Dynasty	Religion (divinely ordained authority) and dynastic kinship	Dynastic Interest	Kingdom and Realm
National	Nation	National Self-determination	National Interest	Nation
Geographical	Geography (place)	History of Geography	Restoring the integrity of historical lands	Geography (place)
State-Territorial	Territorial state	Recognized international borders	<i>Raison d'état</i>	International Borders
Popular	Citizen	Democracy and human rights	Protecting human rights of the citizen	Contingent on the willing & ability of domestic government regarding "Responsibility to protect (R2P)"

“Interdependence sovereignty refers to the ability of a government to regulate the movement of goods, capital, people, and ideas across its borders. Domestic sovereignty refers both to the structure of authority within a state and to the state’s effectiveness or control. International legal sovereignty refers to whether a state is recognized by other states, the basic rule being that only juridically independent territorial entities are accorded recognition. Westphalian sovereignty, which actually has almost nothing to do with the Peace of Westphalia, refers to the autonomy of domestic authority structures—that is, the absence of authoritative external influence” (Krasner 2001: 2). Jackson offer another typology: juridical sovereignty, which is “derived from a right of self-determination—negative sovereignty—without possessing much in the way of empirical statehood, a capacity for effective and civil government—positive sovereignty” (Jackson 1987: 529). Barnett (2010: 45-62) also distinguishes between juridical sovereignty and empirical sovereignty.

⁶¹ The principles on “which the constituent units are separated from one another” (Ruggie 1983: 274).

Different types of sovereignty constitute different behavioral roles that justify some interventions and disallow others. Practices of intervention could be *role performance* of particular type of sovereignty. Popular sovereignty, for example, constitutes particular type of intervention (humanitarian intervention and Responsibility to Protect). National sovereignty constitutes a different type of intervention that is justified by the principles of self-determination and independence of the nation. Dynastic sovereignty constitutes another type of intervention that is justified by dynastic rights and duties. In other words, they type of sovereignty could be a cause of intervention; intervention is not necessarily always a violation of sovereignty.

The legitimacy of interventionist acts is also contingent upon understandings of sovereignty. Humanitarian intervention, for example, is illegitimate and even unthinkable in international system of absolute sovereignty. In contrast, humanitarian intervention is perceived as a legitimate right and even a responsibility in the current international system of popular sovereignty and “responsibility to protect” (R2P). The new understandings of sovereignty as popular sovereignty constitute (make possible) new types of intervention (humanitarian intervention) (Bellamy 2009; Finnemore 2003; Wheeler 2000).⁶²

⁶² In the same vein, different understandings of sovereignty constitute different practices of recognition and non-recognition. The conditions of diplomatic recognition as sovereign state vary across dominant understandings of sovereignty in the system. Changes in the practices of recognition and non-recognition manifest transformations in understandings of sovereignty. The conditions of recognition of new states in post-Cold War era are different from the conditions of recognition in post-World War II period, which were very different from the conditions of recognition in inter-war period. The differences in the practices of recognition are constituted not by changes in distribution of power but changes in institution of sovereignty (Biersteker 2012; Fabry 2010; Jackson 1993; James 1999; Philpott 2001).

Therefore, the first step to explain external intervention in the Arab states system is to explore the dominant type (or types) of sovereignty in the Arab states system. For, the acts of intervention might be the practice of particular type of sovereignty; the acts of intervention might be role performance of a type of sovereignty. We must not assume territorial sovereignty or any type of sovereignty. Instead, to explain intervention we should explore empirically the type of sovereignty in the Arab state system.

The behavioral differences in patterns of intervention and non-intervention in the Arab state system are explained here as manifestations of the transformation of the historically contingent notions of behavioral roles that drive from the distinct types of sovereignty.⁶³

Because there are multiple types of sovereignty, we should not assume that one and only one type of sovereignty operate in the political system. We should not exclude the possibility that different types of sovereignty operate or even compete within the same regional or international system. We should not rule out the possibility that different types of sovereignty compete against each other on being the hegemonic ordering principle of regional or international system. The question on whether one or different types of sovereignty within a political system is an empirical question not a theoretical question. The complementarity or contestation of norms of sovereignty could affect the

⁶³ Similar to the above discussion of external intervention, practice of recognition and non-recognition are also contingent upon the particular type of sovereignty in the international system. Dynastic, national, territorial, popular, and historical sovereignty constitute different rules and practices of recognition and non-recognition. Different types of sovereignty prescribe different behavioral roles that affect practices of recognition and non-recognition. Changes in the practices of recognition and non-recognition are explained here as manifestation of transformation in the behavioral roles prescribed by distinct sovereign identities.

(in)stability of shared understandings of sovereignty, which in turn affect order, ontological security, and uncertainty in the system.

Besides exploring the understandings of sovereignty in the Arab state system, I also explore the practices of sovereignty and intervention in the international system. The Arab states system does not exist within an international vacuum. The practices of sovereignty and intervention are elements in the international normative structure that has impact on the Arab states. The international normative structure affects the legitimacy of the Arab states' practices of intervention and non-intervention. It also affects the international reactions to these regional practices. Exploring the understandings and practices of sovereignty in the international system is also helpful to avoid unquestionable "Arab Exceptionalism" accounts.⁶⁴

International "changes in the content and understanding of sovereignty can greatly affect the ways in which [Arab] states are constrained or enabled to act in their international relations" (Barkin and Cronin 1994: 110). International norms of sovereignty influence the contestation on regional norms of sovereignty. As Finnemore nicely put it:

Norms that fit logically with other powerful norms are more likely to become persuasive and to shape behavior...Mutually reinforcing and logically consistent norms appear to be harder to attack and to have advantage in the normative contestations that occur in social life. In this sense, logic internal to norms themselves shapes their development and, consequently, shapes social change (Finnemore 2003: 71).

⁶⁴ It is striking that the international normative context (international norms and practices of sovereignty) is utterly ignored in the literature on sovereignty and intervention in the Middle East. Even the constructivist literature on sovereignty in the Middle East (Barnett 1998) ignores the norms and practices of sovereignty in international society. This wrongly implies that the regional system operate within an international normative vacuum.

I argue that the level of inter-subjectivity and content of inter-subjectivity of sovereignty in the Arab state system and international system constitute the practices of intervention in the Arab state system. Changes in level and content of inter-subjective sovereignty constitute changes in the practices of intervention.

Sovereignty's Complementary Institution (Borders) and Intervention

The changes in the level of institutionalization of international borders, I argue, constitute changes in practices of external intervention. When international borders suffer from low level of institutionalization, they constitute, in the sense of making possible, acts of intervention. For, the weakness of the institution of international borders blurs the distinction between the “international” and “domestic” arenas and “make a hash of international-relations theory’s level of analysis” (Nexon 2009: 22). Low level of institutionalization of international borders also enables “internalization” of “domestic” disputes and the “domestication” of “international” conflicts, increasing the security interdependence and fear between neighboring states. Low level of institutionalization of borders also causes territorial disputes (Vasques 1995). Consequently, acts of external intervention increase in inter-state systems with low level of institutionalization of international borders. It is not coincidence that new states, whose borders are new and still in early stages of institutionalization, experienced the highest number of intervention since 1945 (Tillema 1989).

The Social Construction of Sovereignty, Autonomy, and Capacity Relationship

Sovereignty is often confused with capacity and autonomy, especially in the literature on globalization and its effect on the state. But the three concepts are analytically separate and independent. Furthermore, the content of each as well as their mutual relationships are socially constructed. As already stated, the meaning of sovereignty is a variable. The content of autonomy as well as the content of capacity are variables too.⁶⁵

The relationship between sovereignty and capacity is socially constructed. Capacity was a condition of sovereign-state recognition at least until the end of World War II. But in the post-colonial world, the new rules of sovereignty have separated sovereignty from capacity. The latter is no longer a necessary condition for recognition of sovereign states. Jackson's *Quasi States* (1990) is the best documentation of this change in sovereignty-capacity relations.

In the same vein, the relationship between sovereignty and autonomy is also socially constructed. In the post-Colonial World, sovereignty and autonomy had intimate relationship. The loss of autonomy was perceived as a threat to sovereignty. But in the globalized world, sovereignty-autonomy relations have changed, as captured by Chayes and Chayes:

Traditionally, *sovereignty has signified the complete autonomy* of the state to act as it chooses, without legal limitation by any superior entity... [but in contemporary interdependent system] sovereignty no longer consists in the freedom of states to act independently, in their perceived self-interest, but in membership in reasonably good standing in the regimes that make up the

⁶⁵ Autonomy is under theorized concept is IR theory. The relations between autonomy and sovereignty are particularly relevant to the study of globalization and its impact on the state.

substance of international life...Sovereignty, in the end, is status—the vindication of the state’s existence as a member of the international system. In today’s setting, the only way most states can realize and express their sovereignty is through participation in the various regimes that regulate and order the international system. (Chayes and Chayes 1995: 26-27; emphasis added)

The changing relationship between autonomy and sovereignty in globalized world is also implicit in Robert Keohane’s institutional account of sovereignty. Under the conditions of complex interdependence,

the meaning of sovereignty changes. *Sovereignty no longer enables states to exert effective supremacy over what occurs within their territories...* what sovereignty confer on states under conditions of complex interdependence is legal authority that can either be exercised to the detriment of other states’ interest or to be bargained away in return for influence over others’ policies and therefore greater gains from exchange. Rather than connoting the exercise of supremacy within a given territory, sovereignty provides the state with a legal grip on an aspect of a transnational process, whether involving multinational investment, the world’s ecology, or the movement of migrants, drug dealers, and terrorists. *Sovereignty is less a territorially defined barrier than a bargaining resource for a politics characterized by complex transnational networks.* (Keohane 1995: 177; emphasis added)

Thus, we must avoid imposing timeless relations between sovereignty, autonomy, and capacity. Instead, we should explore the historically and socially constructed relations of sovereignty, autonomy, and capacity.

Sovereignty, Survival, and IR Theory

Some might underestimate the relevance of sovereignty to security and strategic studies. Instead, this dissertation actually illustrates that sovereignty is inherently a security issue. Sovereignty constitutes particular notions of strategic interest, strategic threats as well as particular security concerns and definitions.

Sovereignty constitutes a particular notion of survival. The meaning of survival of sovereign-state in anarchy is different from the survival of non-sovereign states in

anarchy. Protecting the survival of sovereign-state is not the same as protecting the survival of non-sovereign state. Also, the notion of survival in a system of dynastic sovereignty is different from the notion of survival in systems of national sovereignty or territorial sovereignty. Different types of sovereignty constitute different notions of survival, which constitute different strategic interests, threats, and behaviors.

Neorealism, on the other hand, defines survival in a timeless way regardless of whether the unit is sovereign or non-sovereign. The English school only sees sovereignty as institution that protects the survival of states in international anarchy (Jackson 1990: 167-173). But the relationship between sovereignty and survival is more complex. Sovereignty actually constitutes a particular notion of survival and even security that is different from the notion of survival and security in non-sovereign systems. Sovereignty is not only a solution to timeless notions of survival and security; sovereignty actually constitutes particular notions of survival and security.

Sovereignty constitutes distinctive security threats. “A physical threat of extermination is not required to threaten the will to manifest [sovereign] identity” (Hall: 38). Sovereignty also underpins interests. “Military resources may be used to meet external threats, but the definition of who or what must be protected determines the appropriateness or efficiency of those weapons systems. Positing survival as the most basic interest presumes a self to be preserved.” The type of sovereignty in the system defines the self to be preserved (Klotz and Lynch: 86).

Furthermore, without shared understandings of sovereignty, there can be no stability and order in the system. “The mutual recognition of sovereignty... is a precondition for the normal functioning of a system of sovereign states” (Ruggie 1998:

870). When there is no shared meaning on sovereignty or any constitutive rules, the system is very unstable (873).

The fact that sovereignty is often taken for granted does not mean it has no effects. The most powerful principles are actually those that are taken for granted as acknowledged by realists and constructivists alike. “Legitimizing principles triumph by being taken for granted” as aptly put by Henry Kissinger (Finnemore 2003:85).

The ability to create the underlying rules of the game, to define what constitutes acceptable play, and to be able to get other actors to commit to these rules because they are now part of their self-understandings is perhaps the most subtle and effective form of power” (Barnett and Adler 1998: 424).

My analytical framework of sovereignty sheds new lights on IR theories.

Different IR theories are based on different implicit assumptions on state sovereignty.

The latter play important explanatory role in the theories of neorealism, neoliberalism, and English School than often acknowledged. Neorealism’s balance of power theory is based on an implicit distinctive notion of sovereignty. Realists overlook the fact that different types of sovereignty constitute different practices of balance of power. The practice of internal and external balancing in system of dynastic sovereignty, for example, is different from practice of balance of power in system of national sovereignty or territorial sovereignty.

The neoliberal account of international institutions, complex interdependence, and globalization is based on distinctive notion of sovereignty, which is different from neorealism’s notion of sovereignty. Globalization requires particular understandings of sovereignty otherwise it is impossible to have a globalized world (Keohane 1995).

The different meanings of sovereignty in IR theories are largely originated from the different function that each theory assigns to sovereignty. Realism's (following Hobbes) sovereignty is a solution to the problem of domestic anarchy. English school's sovereignty is a solution to the problem international anarchy. Liberal sovereignty is a solution to problem of predator leader. Sovereign equality is a solution to the problem of empire. Popular sovereignty is a solution to problem of complex interdependence and globalization. Put it differently, IR theories' account of sovereignty are based on different reference points (domestic anarchy; international anarchy; absolute leaders; empire; globalization).⁶⁶ The function of sovereignty differs across the problem it is assigned to solve (Keohane 1995).

But despite its relevance to the explanatory power of the theory, sovereignty is often implicit in IR theories. But as put by Kahneman, "the errors of a theory are rarely found in what it asserts explicitly; they hide in what it ignores or tacitly assume" (Kahneman 2011: 274-275). Making explicit the implicit assumptions of sovereignty in IR theory should help us to construct better IR theories.

⁶⁶ On the importance of reference points to the formation of theories see Kahneman (2011).

PART III: SOVEREIGNTY AND INTERVENTION IN THE ARAB STATE SYSTEM

AFTER EMPIRE: 1922-1960s

Sovereignty and Intervention after Empire

External Intervention was a common practice in the Arab state system following independence from great powers:

- “The Sovereign norm of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states was flouted with stunning and unapologetic regularity” (Gause 1992: 448).
- In the Arab world, “[v]iolations of territorial borders by more powerful neighbours...occur on a regular basis” (Burgis 2009:71)
- “There is one area in which a distinctive regional norm operates. This is not as is conventionally asserted, in the realm of cultures and values, but in the realm of foreign policy, and in particular in the predisposition of Middle Eastern states, more than in any other part of the world, to interfere in each other’s internal affairs.”... “[T]he low salience of sovereignty’ is indeed a remarkable and distinct feature of regional international politics...such a level of sustained intervention and interference... is on a scale unseen elsewhere in the world (Halliday 2009: 15-16).

Argument in Brief

The Arab state system experienced high frequency of external intervention because of the dominance of distinctive types (subjective understandings) of *external sovereignty* in the Arab state system: dynastic sovereignty (Iraq and Jordan under rule of the Hashemite Dynasty), national sovereignty (Egypt under Nasser), and geographical sovereignty (Syria and Iraq). The three types of external sovereignty constituted practices

of intervention because they prescribed behavioral roles to the above states that allowed, legitimized, and justified practices of intervention in other Arab states.

The social roles prescribed by dynastic, national and geographical sovereignty also disallowed recognition of other Arab states. The Hashemite dynasty in Transjordan and Iraq (dynastic sovereignty) did not recognize the sovereignty of Syria and Saudi Arabia; Syria (geographical sovereignty) did not recognize the sovereignty of Lebanon; Iraq (geographical sovereignty) did not recognize the sovereignty of Kuwait; and Egypt under Nasser (national sovereignty) did not recognize the ruling regimes in Arab monarchies as legitimate supreme authority. Non-recognition of the sovereignty of the other states also constituted interventions in the target states.

Constructivists hold that “the mutual recognition of sovereignty...is a precondition for the normal functioning of a system of sovereign states” (Ruggie 1998: 870). But this very same precondition was actually missing in the Arab state system.⁶⁷ The simultaneous existence of the four types of external sovereignty (dynastic, national, state-territorial and geographical) within the same regional Arab state system precluded the consolidation of shared inter-subjective understandings of sovereignty.

Consequently, the Arab state system was not structured by a shared inter-subjective institution of sovereignty. Rather, the Arab state system was structured by conflicting types of sovereignty—conflicting subjectivities of the rules, positions, roles,

⁶⁷ My distinctive arguments of types of sovereignty shows that Walt’s Balance of Threat (1987) politics was embedded within a distinctive structure of constitutive rules of sovereignty in the Arab states system; the regulative rules of the Arab League were not binding because the constitutive rules of sovereignty were contested; and search for legitimacy in state-society relations (Hudson 1977) did take place within contested regional and international inter-state rules of sovereignty.

and practices of sovereignty. Instead of being the shared inter-subjective institution (as often assumed in IR), the institution of sovereignty was actually deeply contested in the Arab state system. The members of the Arab state system were engaged in conflict over the meaning of the rules, positions, roles, and practices of sovereignty instead of acting upon shared meanings of sovereignty.

The absence of shared meanings of sovereignty is a structural cause of uncertainty and fear, and in turn, intervention driven by uncertainty and fear. The absence of the minimum recognized rules regarding who is the legitimate sovereign and the legitimate roles of sovereignty increased uncertainty and fear as well as intervention driven by uncertainty and fear.⁶⁸

Furthermore, the interventions that were driven by dynastic, national and geographical sovereignty were not recognized as legitimate acts by other Arab states, which induced the latter to conduct fear-based “counter-interventions.” For example, Iraq’s interventions in Kuwait caused counter-interventions by Saudi Arabia and Egypt who did not recognize Iraq’s sovereignty claims over Kuwait and feared the rising power of Iraq. The Hashemite’s interventions in Syria caused counter intervention by Egypt and Saudi Arabia who did not recognize the legitimacy of the Hashemite’s sovereignty rights over Syria and feared the increasing power of the Hashemite dynasty. The acts of

⁶⁸ The absence of shared meaning of sovereignty causes significant effects on security and order. Realism’s security dilemma is much more severe in international systems that lack shared meaning of sovereignty and mutual recognition of sovereignty. Neoliberalism’s regulative rules and regimes are much more difficult to construct and respect in international systems whose constitutive rules of sovereignty are seriously contested. Constructivism’s logic of appropriateness is more difficult to follow in systems whose fundamental rules of sovereignty are contested.

counter-interventions increased the total number of interventions in the Arab state system.

At the international system, the norms of non-intervention and state-territorial sovereignty were actually far away from being the hegemonic rules of the game of the international system. As I will elaborate below, the rules of non-intervention and territorial sovereignty were still in their diffusion stage and have yet to reach their high stage of consolidation. The international system in fact experienced high frequency of intervention during this period. Thus, the structure of international system (norms and practices) did not pose robust constraints against the acts of intervention in the regional Arab state system.

At the same time, sovereignty's complementary institution, inter-state borders, suffered from low level of institutionalization, constituted practices of intervention by blurring the division between internal and external affairs and constituting acts of intervention. For, the concept and practice of territorial borders were new in Arab politics. The Arab world had no experience of territoriality. It was a new political practice that entered the Arab state system only after the expansion of interventional society into the Arab world.

The three variables—sovereignty in Arab state system, sovereignty and non-intervention in international system, and inter-state borders in the Arab state system—constituted the high frequency of intervention in the Arab state system from the fall of the Ottoman Empire to 1960s.

In the following chapter, I will discuss sovereignty and intervention in the Arab state system after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, emphasizing the impact of the three

explanatory variables on the practices of intervention. In chapter Six, I will discuss sovereignty and intervention in the Arab state system in 1950s and 1960s.

CHAPTER FIVE: DYNASTIC SOVEREIGNTY AND INTERVENTION: THE ARAB
STATE SYSTEM 1922-1950S

Sovereignty and Intervention in the Arab State System

The Arab state system was formed on the ashes of the Ottoman Empire:

Although the emerging system was deeply penetrated by Britain and France, the intense interactions among the core Arab states indicated that they enjoyed considerable leeway which allowed them to pursue their own interests and form an Arab system with its own patterns and features... The main features of the Arab system had already crystallized in the mid-1930s and that the formation of the Arab League only institutionalized the existing patterns. (Podeh 1998: 50)

The Arab system in its formative years was limited by necessity due to great powers penetration:

Prior to the mid-1930s, most key Arab states (Egypt, Syria, Iraq) were only semi-independent, under various forms of European tutelage, while the only two fully independent Arab states, Yemen and Saudi Arabia, were basically concerned with domestic (mainly tribal) issues, and played a minor role in inter Arab affairs... Even though the quest for independence consumed most nationalist energies, it did not preclude the possibilities of inter-Arab rivalries. (Ben Dor 1983: 142)⁶⁹

During the interwar period, the most powerful Arab political units were in fact two dynasties: the Hashemite dynasty and the Saud dynasty. The house of Hashem ruled Transjordan, Iraq and Greater Syria (Lebanon and Syria; only for twenty months) and the house of Saud ruled the Hejaz (Saudi Arabia). Egypt did not perceive itself an Arab state

⁶⁹ Tibi also acknowledges the existence of a dynastic Arab states system in the interwar period (1997: 203).

(Seale: 16-24). During Paris Peace Conference in 1919, Sa'd Zaghlul, the head of the Egyptian delegation, repeatedly demanded "full national independence for Egypt" and when he was asked by the representatives of Syria, Lebanon, and Transjordan to join them to form a united group to pressure the great powers for the independence of the Arab world as a whole, he refused and asserted that "our problem is an Egyptian problem and not an Arab problem" (Lawson 2006: 25). Egypt eventually acquired the new Arab identity only in the late 1930s (Seale: 16-24).

The Hashemite dynasty in Iraq and Jordan was the most powerful political actor but also the most revisionist one in the Arab state system. Iraq and Jordan were the most frequent interveners in the system. They particularly intervened in Syria and Saudi Arabia, threatening the independence and territorial integrity of these two states. Iraq and Jordan "national interest" was to impose the Hashemite sovereignty on these two countries.⁷⁰ During the interwar period, Iraq and Jordan were also the only Arab states that pursued Arab unity programs (Maddy-Weitzman 1993; Masalha 1991; Porath 1986; Seale 1986).

I argue Iraq and Jordan frequently intervened in Syria and Saudi Arabia because of their dynastic sovereignty. Their practices of intervention embodied their dynastic sovereignty. Their Dynastic sovereignty prescribed distinctive social roles that constituted their practices of intervention in Syria and Saudi Arabia. Their dynastic roles

⁷⁰ The Hashemite case refutes the argument that the most powerful state in the system is a status quo state. Iraq and Jordan under the Hashemite rule were the most powerful countries but at the same time they were revisionist states not status quo states.

of sovereignty also disallowed their diplomatic recognition of the sovereignty of Saudi Arabia and Syria. And non-recognition caused intervention (see Figure 2).

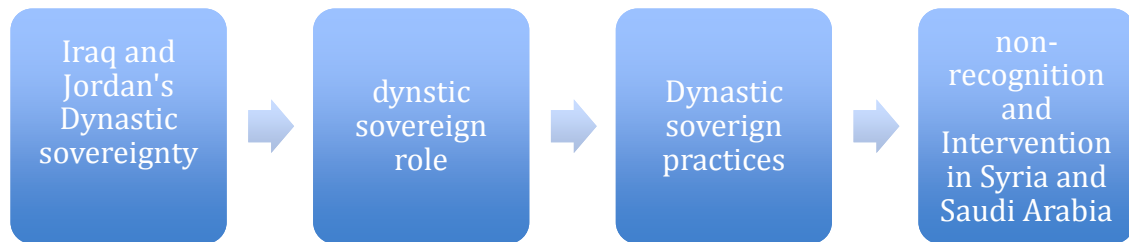


Figure 2: Iraq and Jordan’s Dynastic sovereignty as the constitutive cause of their practices of intervention.

The dynastic sovereignty of Jordan and Iraq under the rule of the Hashemite is clearly embodied in their perceived legitimating principles of their practices of intervention and non-recognition of Iraq and Jordan. They legitimized their sovereign rights over Greater Syria and Saudi Arabia by dynastic principles—the members of the Hashemite dynasty were the kings of Greater Syria and Saudi Arabia in the past before they even became sovereign states.

Members of the House of Hashem ruled Syria and Saudi Arabia until the French Mandate expelled King Faisal from Syria in July 1920 and the House of Saud expelled the Hashemite dynasty from Hijaz in 1926 (Porath 1986: 2). Their sovereign claims over these countries were justified by the historical fact that members of the Hashemite dynasty ruled Saudi Arabia and Syria in the past.⁷¹

⁷¹ Similar to the European Dynasties, The Hashemite in Iraq and Jordan also legitimized their authority by religious principles, claiming that the Hashemite dynasty is the ancestor to prophet Mohammed. On the dynastic sovereignty of European state system, see Reus-Smit (1999).

Therefore, the perceived sovereign role (behavioral expectations) of Iraq and Jordan was to return Hijaz and Greater Syria to the sovereignty (jurisdiction of supreme authority) of the House of Hashem. The origins of these roles go back to the original plan of the Hashemite dynasty, long time before it ruled Iraq and Jordan as evidenced in the following report by a British government official, Sir Alec Kirkbride, who was very close to Hashemite family:

He [Husayn]⁷² and his sons agreed that Ali, the eldest, should succeed their father as King of the Hejaz; that Abdullah, the second, should be King of Iraq and that Faisal, the third, should become King of Syria... At the end of fighting in 1918 Faisal found himself in Damascus and proclaimed himself King of Syria a few months later, thereby carrying out this part of the family programme. The father became King of the Hejaz with the Amir Ali as his Heir Apparent, and because the future of Iraq was still uncertain, the Amir Abdullah became his father's Minister for Foreign Affairs in the hope that his kingdom would come into being in the meanwhile. The plan, however, soon brook down, because Faisal could not come to terms with the French, who had ambitions in Syria, and he was ejected from his new kingdom by a French army in July 1920. Instead of going home to the Hejaz a defeated man, Faisal shrewdly went to the Peace Conference in Paris, from which he emerged after various manoeuvres as the candidate for the throne of Iraq who had the backing of His Majesty's Government. He succeeded in winning the support of the Iraqis and was crowned King at Baghdad in October, 1921.

When Faisal became the chosen candidate for the throne of Iraq the Amir Abdullah was, not unnaturally, furious, but there was not much that he could do about it as he was out of the picture internationally and failed to establish any degree of contact with the Iraqi politicians who alone could have given the means of achieving his ambition. While all this was going on, a mandate over Palestine, a geographical term which included Transjordan also, was granted to Great Britain in July, 1920.

'Abduallah, seeing that he could not become King of Iraq, recruited a private army and announced his intention of marching on Syria to expel the French. On his way north in January 1921 he entered British mandated territory east of the Jordan where he set up a central administration in Amman, taking over the whole

⁷² Sharif Hussaim of Mecca "had always aimed at becoming the Arab Caliph, or at least the king of the Arabs" (Tibi 1997: 20).

country in March 1921. It was not until the following July that His Majesty's Government decided to follow its usual policy of accepting a *fait accompli* and announced that they were prepared to recognize the Amir Abdullah's rule over that part of the mandated territory which lay east of the river Jordan, provided (a) he recognized the validity of the mandate in question and (b) renounced his avowed intention of attempting to conquer Syria. Being well content with the way matters had fallen out, the Amir accepted both conditions without argument" (quoted in Searle 1986: 7-8).

As soon as Abdullah and Faisal became the rulers of Iraq and Jordan, they constituted particular dynastic sovereign identity, roles and practices of the two states. The new sovereign role of Iraq and Jordan was to retain the Hijaz and Greater Syria to the sovereignty of the Hashemite dynasty (Podeh 1998). The principles of dynastic sovereignty explicitly justified their practices of intervention and non-recognition.

Iraq under the Hashemite Dynasty

The endeavor to get for himself [King Faisal] or one of his family possession of the Syrian throne ...had become the main motive in Faisal's policy since the end of 1929.

—Porath (6-7)

Iraq's practices of intervention in Syria included the creation of a monarchist political party in 1928 and the opening of the *Al-Mirsad* newspaper in Damascus, which was the mouthpiece of King Faisal. Both the new political party and the newspaper advocated for the establishment of monarchical regime in Syria compatible with Hashemite's regime.

King Faisal also recruited Syrian politicians to promote his sovereign rights over Syria and he also frequently met with Syrian notables including the leaders of the Druze community in November 1932 to convince them to support his efforts to retain the

Damascus throne. His supporters in Damascus frequently distributed petitions “in favor of entrusting to King Faisal the mission of protecting the rights of the country [Syria]” and to work internationally for the Syrian independence (Porath 1986: 12).

Under the rule of King Faisal, Iraq recruited many Syrians to work as official employees of the government of Iraq in Baghdad. Iraq even recruited Sati’ Al-Husri as the Director of Iraq’s Ministry of Education. Sati’ Al-Husri is the most prominent thinker of Arab nationalism. Before arriving in Baghdad, Al-Husri filled important positions in Damascus and Istanbul. He was Syria’s former minister of Education and he also worked as education official for the Ottoman Empire in Istanbul. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, he found himself unemployed:

Consequently, he went through a swift transformation from pan-Ottomanism to pan-Arabism...Under Faisal, Husri emerged as a prominent Arab nationalist ideologue, and did more than any other figure to inculcate and disseminate the idea of Arab unity in schools, clubs and colleges in Iraq. (Masalha 1991: 680)

Internationally, Iraq’s efforts focused on convincing France and Britain to restore a Hashemite’s king in Syria. In April 1921 Faisal’s envoy, General Haddad, met French Foreign Minister M. Berthelot to convince him that a Hashemite King in Syria will improve the relations between the French and the Arabs (Porath: 4). In February 1926 Iraq’s foreign minister, Nuri al-Said (who became the main advocator of Arab unity plans in 1940s) met with the French High Commissioner for Syria and Lebanon, General Wegand, to convince him to install Ali, the Last Hashemite King of Hijaz, who was expelled by the House of Saud, as the king of Syria. Ali himself also visited Lebanon and met with General Wegand for the same purpose.

Even King Faisal himself visited Paris on November 1925 to convince the French to restore his kingship in Syria (Masalha: 681). After another visit to France in 1931, King Faisal supported rumors that he would soon be the king of Syria as promised by the French government. He even sent Rustum Haider, Faisal's confident Syrian extraction and his finance minister, to Damascus to supply a political and financial support to the pro-Faisal propaganda there. "While in Syria, Rustum haider had let it be understood that Faisal would soon become King of Syria...[and] Iraqi inspired loyalists paraded the streets of Damascus carrying Faisal's portrait" (Masalha: 687).

Iraq also tried to convince France to install a monarchical regime rather than republication regime in Syria, to ease the conditions for a future political union between Iraq and Syria (Porath: 5). The Hashemite in Iraq and Jordan also tried to convince France, Britain and Zionist organizations in the West that Hashemite sovereignty over Palestine and Syria would solve the Arab-Jewish problem in Palestine (Porath 1986).

King Faisal died in 1933 without fulfilling his dream. But his death did not stop the Hashemite dynasty to continue in promoting their sovereign rights over Syria and Saudi Arabia. One of the heirs of Faisal was Prince Abdullah, the most effective Hashemite ruler in Iraq from 1939 to 1958.⁷³ Until his death in 1958, "[Regent Abullah's] gaze remained fixed on his grandfather's kingdom of Hijaz, lost to Ibn Sa'ud, and on his uncle Faisal's lost kingdom of Syria...his ambition was to revive the throne of Damascus for himself" (Seale: 9).

⁷³ He held the title of Regent from 1939 to 1 May 1953 when Faisal II was crowned king of Iraq.

Iraq even drawn a plan of military invasion of Syria in 1953 after realizing that other forms of intervention in Syria failed to bring Syria back under the sovereignty of the Hashemite dynasty in Baghdad. The military invasion plan did not take place only because the Iraqi military generals rejected it for practical difficulties (Seale: 267-8).

“Most Iraqi governments have made it a principle to interfere in the internal affairs of Syria” as admitted by Major-General Ghazi al-Daghistani, deputy chief of staff of the Iraqi army in 1950s (in Seale: 266. Only a military coup in Baghdad in 1958 did succeed to end the Hashemite dynasty rule in Iraq as well as its ambition to impose the Hashemite sovereignty over Syria.

Jordan

Jordan was also a frequent intervener in Syria and Saudi Arabia due to dynastic principles. Amir Abdullah was unsatisfied with his new position as Amir of Jordan. He was supposed to be the king of Iraq according to the original family program outlined above but his brother Faisal “stole” the throne from him. Thus, he believed that he had the sovereign right to Faisal’s lost kingdom of Syria.

Imposing Abdullah’s sovereignty over Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine (Greater Syria plan) became the sovereign role of Jordan. Soon after independence on 28 March 1946, Abdullah’s “Greater Syria” plan (political unity of Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Palestine) became a formal principle of Jordan’s foreign policy.

King Abdullah publicly emphasized his dynastic sovereign rights over Greater Syria, as told in a Lebanese news source and *Al-Ahram* on 31 August 1946:

My father [Sharif Husayn) fought neither for the independence of Lebanon, nor for that of Syria, nor that for Transjordan; he fought and died for the Arab countries as a whole...My policy is clear: I want a state which includes Syria,

Transjordan, Palestine, and Lebanon; yes, Lebanon ... There is neither great nor little Syria. There is only a single country bounded to the west by the sea, to the north by Turkey, to the east by Iraq and to the south by the Hejaz—which constitute Syria. (quoted in Searle: 13)

Like Iraq, Jordan also frequently intervened in Syria and Saudi Arabia. For example, Jordan supported a rebellion against the Saudi monarchy in 1932. Abdullah's followers distributed leaflets in Saudi Arabia calling upon the people to expel the house of Saud from Hijaz, so Saudi Arabia could return to its rightful rulers (the Hashemite dynasty) (16, 27).

Iraq and Jordan intervened more in Syria than in Saudi Arabia only because they assumed the Saud kingdom will collapse after the death of Ibn Saud and it would eventually return to the Hashemite sovereignty (8, 13).

The principles of dynastic sovereignty were also embodied in Jordan and Iraq bilateral relations, especially political unity plans between the two countries. King Abdullah of Jordan initiated political unity plans with Iraq to empower his status as the senior member of the Hashemite family. In 1946-47 Abdullah pursued a treaty of common foreign, defense, and financial policies with Iraq. He also suggested the pooling of the Iraqi and Jordanian embassies abroad and “the flying of the Hashemite flag of the Hijaz alongside their respective flags” but his proposal was rejected by Iraq “even though these proposals did not impinge upon on either party's independence and sovereignty” (Maddy-Weitzman 1990: 65). Later on April 14, 1947 Iraq and Jordan concluded a “Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance,” which was almost completely empty of operative values (Ibid). Both Saudi Arabia and Syria expressed concern that the inter-Hashemite

unity plans would be the first step toward imposing their sovereignty over Syria and Saudi Arabia.

After the assassination of King Abdullah of Jordan in the spring of 1951, Iraq also proposed a political unity with Jordan “to preserve the Hashemite throne there” (70). To do so, Iraq intervened politically in Jordan through providing financial support to Jordanian politicians to advocate the idea of unity. They also published articles in Jordanian newspapers that unity with Iraq would serve the sovereignty of Jordan and support the Palestinian case. However, the interference of Iraq in Jordan was perceived “as direct interference in Jordan’s internal affairs” by Jordanians as well as other Arab states (70).

The last inter-Hashemite unity plan was conducted in 1958 with the creation of the Arab Federation. According to the unity agreement, the federation flag would be the Hashemite flag of the Hijaz and Iraq’s king Faisal II serve as the president of the federal government while King Hussein serve as president in the absence of Faisal II. Even though the federation jurisdiction included foreign and defense affairs, establishment and management of armed forces, it also emphasizes, “each state was to preserve its independence and existing governmental structure” (72). The federation between Iraq and Jordan was described as a “family compact.” But on July 14, 1958 a military coup ended the rule of Hashemite dynasty in Iraq, after four decades in power. One day later, on July 15, Iraq’s new regime dissolved the federation with Jordan.

The principles of dynastic sovereignty were also embodied in the political discourse. The discourse of the Hashemite often includes the word “sovereign” referring to personal sovereignty rather than national or territorial. Accordingly, the Hashemite

family, rather than the territory or the nation, is the sovereign. Abdullah and his supporters in Syria, for example, repeatedly insisted, “*Amir Abdullah was the only sovereign capable of realizing Arab unity*” (Porath 1984: 178).

Iraq and Jordan’s Arab Unity Plans

The Hashemite dynasties in Iraq and Jordan were the *only* Arab states who seriously promoted Arab unity plans between 1920 and early 1950s. Hardly surprising, the Arab unity plans were compatible with Iraq and Jordan dynastic ambitions. Iraq promoted the Fertile Crescent unity plan and Jordan promoted the “Greater Syria” unity plan (Searle: 8). The link between the dynastic sovereignty of Iraq and Syria and their unity plans were nicely captured by Patrick Seale’s remarks on Iraq:

The determination to return and liberate Syria consumed [Faisal and his] heirs and became a main plank in the pan-Arab programme...Hashemite claims to Syria based on Faysal’s twenty-month rule in Damascus from 1918 to 1920 provided a good part of the justification for the plan of Fertile Crescent unity advanced by the Iraqi statesman Nuri al-Sa’id during the Second World War. (Searle: 8)

The goal of the unity between Iraq and Syria was motivated by dynastic rather than national legitimating principle. Even George Antonious, the author of *The Arab Awakening* and propagandist of Arab nationalism, admitted already in 1936 that “there is no connection between Iraq and Syria, that the Iraqis constituted a people on their own, that a wide desert separated Iraq and Syria, that King Faisal had erred in pursuing the unity of these two countries and that there is a strong Iraqi national feeling” (Porath 1984: 174).

The Hashemite in Iraq and Jordan did not seek the unity of all Arab states; rather they wanted to unite only the countries that the Hashemite dynasty ruled in the past. Iraq

and Jordan also tried to maneuver the talks on the Arab League to place a member of the Hashemite family on the Syrian throne (Porath 1984: 91). During the negotiations over the Arab league, Abdullah of Jordan sent a memorandum to the participants of the conference of autumn 1944 in which he emphasizes “the part played by the House of Hashim in the Arab awakening and therefore his right for leadership” (Porath 1984: 184). But the Hashemite failed to achieve their goal and the Arab League eventually adopted the rules of state-territorial sovereignty and non-intervention, delegitimizing the practices of dynastic sovereignty.

Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and Syria imposed the rules of non-intervention and state-territorial sovereignty on the Arab League Charter to delegitimize the dynastic sovereignty claims of Iraq and Jordan. “The careful and specific safeguards of the sovereignty of member states written into the League Charter precluded any attempt by Iraq and Transjordan to merge with Syria or to change her form of government from a republic to a monarchy” (Seale: 23).

It is not surprising that The Arab League Charter was rejected by Abdullah of Jordan: “Everyone knows that the Arab League was no more than a game organized by Nahas Pasha [Egypt’s Prime minister] for his own ends...” (Seale: 13). Abdullah also accused the Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Said of “the betrayal of the Hashemite House” for his role in the final charter of the Arab league (in Porath: 57).

Most Arab states did not accept Iraq and Jordan’s dynastic sovereign rights over Greater Syria and Saudi Arabia. In September 1944 the Syrian Prime minister Sadallah al-Jabari welcomed the new Jordanian consul in Damascus with a statement that delegitimizes Jordan’s sovereignty claims over Syria:

the Syrian government favors the formation of greater Syria but without alteration of the present republican regime. Trans-Jordan is part of Syria and should be reunited with republican Syria. The wishes of the inhabitants of both territories in regard to regimes could be tested by a plebiscite. As regards Lebanon the Syrian Government desire complete reunion or, if this is not possible, reduction of Lebanon to its original (i.e., pre-World War I) boundaries. (Porath 1984: 185-186)

The Syrian's prime minister's statement challenged the Hashemite's legitimation principles by imposing alternative legitimation principle that subordinate Jordan to Syrian sovereignty based on historical geographical principles. President Quwatli of Syria also publicly denounced Jordan's Greater Syria plan on his reelection in 1947. The Syrian chamber met in special session in 1947 to "protest unanimously against the [Greater Syria] project which conceals personal ambitions, Zionist designs as well as ties which threaten Syria's independence, sovereignty and her republican regime..." (quoted in Seale: 13). On the other hand, some members the ruling elites in Syria and Lebanon perceived the practices of the Hashemite as legitimate and even helped them to impose the Hashemite sovereignty on Syria and Lebanon. The Druze notables in Jabal Druze (the Druze Mountains) in southern Syria, for example, invited Abdullah to enter Jabal Druze and take over the area. They even met with the French representative in Syria expressing their interest to be under the sovereignty of Amir Abdullah of Jordan.

Egypt did not have serious concerns about Iraq and Jordan in 1920s and 1930s because it did not perceived itself as an Arab state. Even by the beginning of the Second World War "there was as yet little which could be described as a coherent view of Egypt's place in the Arab world" (Seale: 18). Only after acquiring the identity of Arab states and joined the "family of the Arab states" in the early years of World War II,

she [Egypt] quickly saw that her national interest lay on containing the Hashemites, in preventing the emergence of the Eastern Arab world of power

strong enough to challenge her, in preserving the status quo of small sovereign nation-states subordinate to her. To retain her primacy, she needed in particular to prevent Syria from falling under the influence of either Baghdad or Amman. (Seale: 23)

Saudi Arabia also feared the dynastic ambitions of Iraq and Jordan. Amir Faisal, son of Abd al-Aziz Al Saud, expressed his profound concerns to a British official: “how detrimental it would be to his [Ibn Saud’s] interest if a third neighboring country [Syria] were placed under Hashemite rule” (Porath: 38). Some of the Palestinian leadership also opposed the Hashemite’s claims over Palestine. Raghib Nashashibi, one of the prominent Palestinian notables, told a British official that “he preferred the continuation of British rule in whatever form, including the transformation of Palestine into a Crown Colony, to its incorporation into Greater Syria under Abdallah’s sovereignty” (Porath: 38). Arab nationalists were also suspicious of Hashemite “Arab unity” plans for their close relations with Great Britain and Abdullah’s relations with Zionist organizations (Seale: 14).

To prevent Iraq and Jordan’s plans, Egypt and Saudi Arabia also intervened in Syria, provided political and financial support to the domestic politicians who rejected the Hashemite policies. All in all intensified the practices of intervention in the Arab state system.

The notable dynastic features of the Arab state system in its first four decades is acknowledged by the prominent Arab scholar Bassam Tibi: “Politically, the history of Arab nationalism in the period 1920 to 1952 was a royal history of kings struggling for larger entities to sustain their power” (Tibi: 1997: 22).

To sum this section, Iraq and Jordan were the most frequent interveners in the Arab state system between 1922 and 1950s. Their practices of intervention embodied and

constituted by rules, position, and practices of dynastic sovereignty. Their dynastic sovereignty also constituted their diplomacy towards the Arab political unity plans and the Arab League.

On the other hand, the other Arab states did not accept Iraq and Jordan dynastic rights, roles and practices. They perceived the dynastic roles and practices of Iraq and Jordan as a threat and they attempted to contain Iraq and Jordan by supporting political forces in Syria who opposed the Hashemite plans, imposing the rules of non-intervention, territorial sovereignty and territorial integrity on the charter of the Arab League and pressuring the great powers to oppose the Hashemite plans.

The structure of the Arab state system was not structured by shared inter-subjective meanings of sovereignty but competing meanings on sovereignty. The Arab states were engaged on a conflict on defining the legitimate position of sovereignty (who is a legitimate sovereign?) and the legitimate roles and practices of sovereignty. The absence of shared rules of sovereignty constituted uncertainty and fear as well as interventions driven by uncertainty and fear.

The alternative accounts, on the other hand, impose or assume an ideal type of state-territorial sovereignty in the Arab state system without exploring the actual meanings of sovereignty embodied in the political practices of intervention in the Arab state system.

The dynastic sovereignty practices of intervention of Iraq and Jordan as well as the counter interventions by the other Arab states in the Arab state system during the interwar period were conducted within a distinctive international context. The

international context within which Arab states were interacted with each other (and intervened into each other's affairs) is too important to be ignored.

Sovereignty and Intervention in International System during the Interwar Period

Neither state-territorial sovereignty nor non-intervention was shared inter-subjective norm in the international system between 1920s and late 1950s. State-territorial sovereignty and non-intervention were far from being a consolidated (internalized) norm in the international system during this period as evidenced in both international treaties and practices (Zacher 2001; Elden 2009; Bull 1984; Agnew 1994; Finnemore 2003; Vincent 1974).

In fact, "interventions proliferated" in the international system during the interwar period (Hoffman 1984:14).⁷⁴ "The period from 1914 to 1945 is one in which there was no clear "order"[on intervention and non-intervention] at all. Indeed, the large wars of this period have often been viewed as wars fought to determine the kind of order that should prevail" (Finnemore 2003: 95). According to Hedley Bull,

after the founding of the League of Nations there was a growing feeling that the ideas of sovereignty, equality, and non-intervention were an obstacle to the progressive development of international organization. Even by the time of the Second World War these ideas were far from having been fully realized even within the European or Western World (the White nations of the British Commonwealth, for example, were preoccupied with the pursuit of equal status throughout the interwar period), quite apart from their lack of effective application to the non-European or non-Western world, and indeed during the Second World War they were wholly repudiated in their application to the European continent itself by the hierarchical system of Hitler's New Order. (1984: 4)

⁷⁴ According to Hoffman, interventions proliferated "because there is no agreement on the principles of domestic legitimacy" (1984: 14).

During the interwar period, the principle of “territorial integrity” was still in the emergence stage and far from reaching its institutionalization stage (Zacher 2001: 236). Even “the great powers were divided in their commitment to the territorial integrity norm, and the supporters lacked the commitment to use force to uphold states’ territorial boundaries” (Zacher 2001: 220).

This was the international context within which the Hashemite dynasty (in Iraq and Jordan) repeatedly attempted to impose their sovereignty on Syria and Saudi Arabia during the inter-war period. The Hashemite attempts to restore their sovereignty over Saudi Arabia and Syria were conducted at the same time the international rules of sovereignty and non-intervention were seriously contested in the international system. They were far from being hegemonic rules of the game in the international system.

In other words, the Hashemite dynasty in Iraq and Jordan were not constrained by international inter-subjective norms of territorial sovereignty and non-intervention. Ignoring this international context excludes an important part of the story on Hashemite intervention in Syria and Saudi Arabia. Telling the story on the Hashemite interventions in Syria and Saudi Arabia from the perspective of an ideal type of territorial sovereignty and non-intervention without taking into account the historical norms and practices of international system is a misleading story.

Sovereignty’s Complementary Institution: Interstate Borders in the Arab State System

The Arab state system experienced high frequency of intervention also because inter-state borders were still in their low level of institutionalization in the Middle East.

The practices of intervention and non-intervention in modern international society are contingent upon the rules of territoriality (including the institution of inter-state borders).⁷⁵ But territoriality rules suffered from low level of institutionalization in the early stages of the Arab state system because they were alien rules, incompatible with traditional political practices in the Arab world (Mendelson 1998).

The rules of territoriality entered Arab politics only after the expansion of the international society to the Arab world in the twentieth century. The Post Colonial Arab state is actually the first territorial political unit that ever established in the Arab world. It is also the first unit with political borders. Arab politics has tradition of neither territoriality nor political borders.

The theory and practice of Islam⁷⁶ lack territoriality and political borders. “[N]either internal sovereignty, with its conception of citizenship and national identity and loyalty, *nor external sovereignty, with its idea of mutual recognition of boundaries and authority over that territory, has a real counterpart in Arabic-Islamic history*” (Tibi 1990: 127; emphasis added).

The Islamic state was not a territorial state. “The basis of the Islamic state was ideological, *not political, territorial* or ethical and the primary purpose of government was to defend and protect the faith, not the state” (Lamton 1981:13; quoted in Joffe 1994: 2; emphasis added).

⁷⁵ I use them territoriality and borders interchangeably even though they are not exactly the same. Elden (2001) discusses on the relations between territoriality and borders through history.

⁷⁶ On Islam in the world of nation states see Piscatori (1986).

Sovereignty (*siyada*), then, was seen as a divine attribute, not an inherent attribute of a secular political construct or of authority within such a construct. *The crucial aspect of this type of constitutional structure was that it was concerned primarily with community and not with territory.* Sovereignty was exercised over the community and, by definition therefore, there could be no prior notion of sovereignty over unoccupied territory (Joffee: 2-3; emphasis added).

Islam has no tradition of territorial wars, “Raids by one tribe into the territory of another were common, but such incursions were generally aimed at snatching movable property, and *not for territorial expansion*” (Hashmi 2007: 194; emphasis added). “[t]erritorial expansion is prominently absent from all the motives presented in the Quran for fighting (*qital*)” (Hashmi 2007: 200).⁷⁷ Put simply, political territorial units were absent in Islam.

Political borders were also absent in Islam: “Physical demarcations of a tribe’s boundaries were likely rare, and if present, constructed crudely of stones, stakes, or shallow ditches” (Hashmi 194). “The works of early Muslim geographers also indicate that the idea of well-defined territorial boundaries was lacking with respect to both the frontiers separating *dar al-Islam* from *dar al-harb*, as well as the internal boundaries that divided *dar al-Islam*” (Hashmi: 197). Historically, “the frontiers of Dar al-Islam always remained extremely fluid” (197). Ralph Brauer’s work on boundaries in Islam from the ninth through the fourteenth century found that boundaries existed only

⁷⁷ The absence of territorial politics is also manifested in the importance of *hijra* (migration) in Prophet Mohammed life. For some scholars, *hijra* became a religious duty for true believers who withdraw from corrupted societies. The Quran also emphasize the importance of *hijra*: “Was the earth not spacious enough for you to migrate [away from evil]?” ((4:97) Hashmi: 196-197).

in the sense that as one progressed in a direction away from the center of a state, one would sooner or later pass from one sovereignty to another or that one's taxes would flow to different places on either side of such a division. Yet, clearly in the minds of these cartographers *such boundaries were constituted not as sharply defined boundary lines but rather a transition zones of uncertain sovereignty between two states.* (quoted in Hashmi 197; emphasis added)

The notion of maritime territory was also absent in Islam:

On the whole, it seems to be the case that Arab governments did not in the past attach much importance to maritime sovereignty. The sea was simply somewhere to catch fish, dive for pearls, navigate in pursuance of trade, and so on. . . . Similar considerations tended to apply to small and uninhabited islands. On the whole, Arab rulers seem, until the present century, to have treated them in much the same way as the sea: they were not much concerned about the question of sovereignty over them. . . ." (Mendelson 1998: 135)

The Arabs did not have developed "notions of property when it came to wells and water-holes, grazing areas and so on; but even these proprietorial rules were mitigated to some extent by considerations of hospitality and humanity" (134).

The lack of territorial units and political border is hardly surprising from the perspective of Islamic thoughts. Both the Quran and *sunna* (moral injunctions and example) lack any reference to territorial units. In the Quran, "*the main functionality of territory is not to serve as a basis for a political unit, or even as a basis for the implementation of the Shari'ah, but as a place in which a people find shelter, security, and a livelihood*" (Abou El Fadl 2007: 220; emphasis added). Even Dar al-Islam and Dar al-Harb are non-territorial units (Hashmi 196-198).

The Quran and sunna has no reference to territorial or political boundaries but they do have many references to social, religious boundaries that separate humanity based on theological and ideological differences as illustrated in a famous verse in The Quran: "O humanity! We created you from a male and a female, and made you into

peoples and tribes that you may know one other...” ((49:13) In Hashim 182-183).⁷⁸ The word boundary (*Hadd*) appears 14 times in the Quran but it always appears in plural (*huddud*) and refers to “the limits or ordinance established by God for one who would live a righteous life” (Hashmi: 182).

Theoretically, “the Qur’anic discourse challenges the legitimacy of formal borders—a challenge that is consistent with the notion of Islam as a universal moral message that cannot be confined or limited by territorial constraints” (Abou El Fadl 2007: 215). This is similar to Hashmi argument that the idea of political boundaries is incompatible with the idea of *Dar al-Islam* because the goal of the latter is to expand and annex *Dar al-harb* (196). Khan also came to similar conclusion that “*the Quranic concept of sovereignty is universal, that is non-territorial, transcendental, meaning beyond human agency, indivisible, inalienable and truly absolute*” (Ijtihd, December 30,1999; emphasis added).⁷⁹

The nobility territorial borders in the Arab state system were captured by British officials reports as the one by the Residency Agent after his visit to Arabia in the summer of 1937:

In his report, the Agent said that the rulers had admitted that they had no fixed frontiers with their neighbours, but that they had given him instead details of what they considered their *ihram* (sacred possession, and therefore inviolable). The only ruler who was absolutely sure of the extent of his territory was Sa’id of

⁷⁸ Some scholars argue that artificial territorial dividers are not compatible with this verse as they would pose an obstacle to mutual exploration and edification between peoples and tribes (Abou El Fadi 2003: 225).

⁷⁹ Yet, the Quran and *sunna do* include many references to sacred spaces; namely, Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem (Hashmi: 186). But these sacred spaces are not territorial political units with political boundaries.

Dunai. The Sultan of Sharjah, by contrast, was the only one who refused to state which territory he claimed. (Said Zahlan 1978: 148; quoted in Joffe 1994)

The British Officer Dickson also recalls his conversation with Faisal al-Shiblain, a leader of Ikhwan, a powerful Bediun warriors groups in Saudi Arabia. After the demarcation of political borders in the region, Dickson warned Faisal not to cross political border for the risk of being bombed, but Faisal answer was striking: “Where is the boundary? We don’t know any boundary, we have never been told anything. If you mean Iraq or Kuwait tribes, we [Ikhwan] understand, and I tell you they are safe” (Helms 1981: 272; quoted in Korany 1987: 65).

The contemporary rules of supreme authority and non-intervention are dependent upon the rules of territoriality but the above discussion shows that territoriality rules were new concepts, rules and practices in Arab politics. Their low level of institutionalization made it harder to institutionalize the rules of state-territorial sovereignty and non-intervention. In other words, the low level of institutionalization of territoriality and political borders made the institutionalization process of sovereign territorial states system in the Arab world a longer and difficult process.

My argument on territoriality is different from the cultural and post-colonial accounts. The alternative arguments posit that the new territorial borders are not compatible with the “natural” borders of traditional indigenous groups. They also argue that inter-state borders suffered from low level of institutionalization because they divided the Islamic umma and the Arab nation.

Instead, I argue that the notion of political borders and territorial units themselves were absent in the political history and practice of Islam. They suffered from low level of

institutionalization because they were new political practices. It is the newsness of the borders that explain their low level of institutionalization. Thus, Arabism did not create the a-territorial politics in the Middle East. The absence of political boundaries was common practice in the Middle East way before the emergence of Pan-Arabism.

Conclusion

The Arab state system experienced high frequency of intervention between 1920s and 1950s because of the dominance of dynastic sovereignty in the Arab state system; lack of shared inter-subjective sovereignty in the Arab state system; the absence of shared inter-subjective norms of territorial sovereignty, non-intervention and territorial integrity in the international system, and low level of institutionalization of inter-state borders in the Arab world. In the following chapter, I turn to discuss sovereignty and intervention in the Arab state system in 1950s and 1960s.

CHAPTER SIX: NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND INTERVENTION: THE ARAB STATE SYSTEM 1950S-1960S

The practices of intervention in the Arab state system did not abate after the end of World War II. Rather, it even intensified.

There was a general disregard for borders and for national sovereignty when it came to trying to influence an Arab neighbour, to put pressure on it or to try to stop it from pressuring you. Over the years this has taken the form of direct military intervention, assassinations, kidnappings, bombings, sabotage, newspaper and radio campaigns, and support for the political opponents of rival regimes(Owen 2004: 66).

The most frequent interveners during this period were Egypt under Nasser, Iraq and Syria under the Bath. Exploring the meanings of sovereignty embodied in their practices of intervention reveals that they were driven by distinctive meanings of sovereignty. Egypt's acts of interventions were constituted by and embodied national sovereignty. Syria's acts of intervention in Lebanon and Iraq's acts of intervention in Kuwait were constituted by and embodied geographical sovereignty.

Following World War II, the practices of intervention in the Arab state system embodied distinctive understandings of sovereignty, particularly national sovereignty and geographical sovereignty but also dynastic sovereignty of Iraq and Jordan, at least until 1958 coup in Iraq that ended the Hashemite regime in Baghdad. National, dynastic and geographical sovereignty constituted distinctive roles of sovereignty that called upon the above Arab states to intervene into domestic affairs of other state. Their acts of

intervention also led to counter-interventions, driven by fear, multiplying the acts of intervention in the system.

Consequently, the Arab state system was structured by the absence of hegemonic and shared meaning of sovereignty. Rather, the Arab state system was structured by conflicting meanings of sovereignty. The Arab states held conflicting meanings on the positions of sovereignty (who is the legitimate sovereign?) And on what constitute legitimate roles and practices of sovereignty. The position, roles, and practices of sovereignty were actually contested. The Arab states engaged in a conflict on defining the legitimate inter-subjectivity of sovereignty instead of acting upon shared meanings of sovereignty.

At the international level, the rules of non-intervention and territorial sovereignty, which are often assumed in IR and Middle East area studies literature, were still not hegemonic. They were more consolidated and institutionalized compared to the interwar period. Still, they have yet to reach the highly institutionalized stage; they have yet to reach the highest stage of consolidated, internalized shared inter-subjective norms.

At the same time, sovereignty's complementary institution, interstate borders in the Arab state system, still did not reach the high level of institutionalization even though it became more institutionalized compared to the interwar period.

The combination of the three variables— dominance of national, dynastic and geographical sovereignty and absence of inter-subjective meaning of sovereignty in the Arab state system, the low level of inter-subjectivity of norms and practices of territorial sovereignty and non-intervention in international system, and low level of institutionalization of inter-state borders in the Arab world—constituted the high

frequency of intervention in the Arab state system during the three decades following World War II.

Sovereignty and Intervention in the Arab State System

Egypt's National Sovereignty and Intervention

The traditional role of Egypt in the Arab state system was to contain the Hashemite dynasty in Iraq and Jordan:

Once Egypt opted for membership of the Arab family she quickly saw that her national interest lay in containing the Hashemites, in preventing the emergence in the Eastern Arab world of a power strong enough to challenge her, in preserving the status quo of small sovereign nation-states subordinate to her. To retain her primacy, she needed in particular to prevent Syria from falling under the influence of either Baghdad or Amman. (Seale: 23)

The dynastic sovereignty of Iraq and Jordan, particularly its associated roles and practices of intervention and non-recognition, constituted a threat to Egypt. Driven by its fears from the dynastic ambitions of Amman and Baghdad, Egypt fought for orchestrating an alternative regional order based upon the principles of territorial sovereignty and non-intervention.

Egypt efforts culminated in organizing the conferences preceded the formation of the Arab League. During the negotiations, Egypt, in cooperation with Saudi Arabia and Syria, orchestrated the Charter of the Arab League to make sure it includes the principles of state-territorial sovereignty and non-intervention. In fact, the main goal of the Arab League Charter, which strongly adopts territorial sovereignty and non-intervention, was to delegitimize the dynastic roles and practices of Iraq and Jordan.

The traditional practices of Egypt in the Arab state system, including its acts of intervention in Syria and its efforts to institutionalize the principles of territorial state

sovereignty and non-intervention in the Arab League, embodied and reified Egypt's distinctive notion of state-territorial sovereignty and its associated principle of *Raison D'état*.

The 1953 Free Officers military coup, however, ended Egypt's traditional notion of state-territorial sovereignty and its associated legitimating principle of *raison d'état*, roles and practices. After the coup, Egypt's new rulers adopted a new principle of sovereignty that constituted distinctive sovereignty roles and practices. Egypt's new regime adopted a new principle of sovereignty—national sovereignty. The new leader of Egypt, Gamal Abed Al-Nasser, through his discourse and practices, transformed Egypt's traditional territorial-state-sovereignty into national-sovereignty.

By adopting pan-Arabism as its official policy (Searle: 197), Egypt's transformed from state-territorial-sovereign state to national sovereign state. Egypt's new sovereign identity—national sovereignty—constituted new sovereign roles and practices that were in conflict with the rules of territorial sovereignty and non-intervention.

Why did Egypt's national sovereignty constitute acts of intervention in the domestic affairs of Arab states? The new sovereign identity—national sovereignty—replaced the territorial-state legitimating principle of *raison d'état* with a new legitimating principle of national self-determination (Hall 1998: 150).

According to Egypt's national sovereignty, the Arab nation is the new sovereign in the Arab world, replacing the old sovereigns, who were the ruling dynasties and nobilities in the Arab world.

The notion that the Arab nation is the legitimate wielder of the sword of state sovereignty altered the roles and practices of Egypt's foreign policy. Consequently,

Egypt's sovereign role became protecting the independence, sovereignty and self-determination not merely of Egypt but also the Arab nation as a whole. Put slightly different, Egypt under Nasser adopted "national sovereignty," which replaced its traditional identity of "state sovereignty" (Barkin and Cronin 1994).

Due to its national sovereign identity, Egypt perceived intervention in other Arab states a legitimate practice as long as the goal is to protect the sovereignty, independence, and self-determination of the Arab nation. Furthermore, changes in Egypt sovereign identity, modified its perception of international boundaries within the Arab homeland. Under its new sovereign identity, the international borders in the Arab homeland are malleable in the sense that they should not be an obstacle for pursuing the much higher value of self-determination, sovereignty and independence of the Arab nation. The latter are much higher in value than international borders. This change in Egypt's value of borders reflects a change from state-territorial sovereignty (borders are fixed and territorially determined) to national sovereignty (Rodney Bruce Hall 1999; Barkin and Cronin 1994).

Simply put, Egypt's pan-Arabism foreign policy was not a violation of sovereignty as often asserted by IR and Middle East area studies. Rather, Egypt's pan-Arabism embodied a particular type of sovereignty, national sovereignty, which constituted roles and practices that were in conflict with the roles and practices constituted by state-territorial sovereignty. The conflict in the Arab state system was not between sovereignty and pan-Arabism (Barnett 1988); rather, the conflict was between different types of sovereignty.

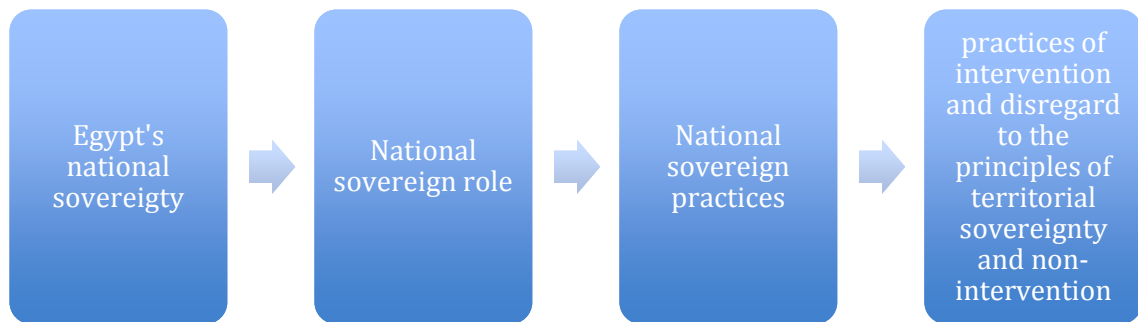


Figure 3: Egypt's national sovereign identity as a constitutive cause of its practices of intervention.

Egypt's national sovereignty, which perceives the Arab nation as the new sovereign, legitimized and constituted Egypt's acts of intervention in other Arab states.

Muhammad Hassanin Haykal, one of Nasser's closest officials and the editor of *Al-Ahram*, was very explicit on the legitimacy of Egypt's intervention in domestic affairs of other Arab states:

As a state, Egypt deals with all Arab governments, whatever their forms or systems, she takes her place beside them in the Arab League and at the United Nations and concludes defense, trade, cultural and other agreements with them...As a revolution, Egypt should deal only with the people. This does not imply interference on our part in the affairs of others, since the fundamental premise of our struggle is that that Arab people are a single nation. If Egypt as a state recognizes frontiers in her dealings with governments, Egypt as a revolution should never hesitate to halt at frontiers, but should carry her message across them. (Kerr 1971: 29; emphasis added)

Dawisha also emphasizes the relations between Egypt's national sovereignty and intervention:

Since Arab nationalism was the primary ideological and emotional identification of every Arab...According to Nasir, Egypt had the not just the right, but the duty to intrude into the affairs of other countries that were not conducting themselves in accordance with Arab nationalist principles. (Adeed Dawisha 2003: 152; quoted in Lawson 2006: 144; emphasis added)

Inter-state borders were clearly not the foundation of Nasser's relations with Arab states as he claimed on the second anniversary of the Egyptian revolution, 23 July 1954:

Compatriots, Egypt has started a new era of relations with the Arabs—an era based on *true and frank fraternity*, facing up to and thinking out problems and endeavoring to solve them. The aim of the Revolution Government is for the Arabs to become *one Nation* with all its sons collaborating for the common welfare... The revolution also believes that *the weight of the defense of Arab states falls first and foremost on the Arabs* and they are worthy of undertaking it. (Seale 198; emphasis added)⁸⁰

Nasser's Arab Unity Plans and Sovereignty

To pursue the self-determination, sovereignty and independence of the Arab nation, Egypt fought for Arab unity but Nasser's meaning of Arab unity did not include political union. This position of Egypt regarding Arab unity is often overlooked in the literature.

Egypt's national sovereign identity did not constitute a national interest in territorial or political union of Arab states. Unlike Iraq and Jordan, Egypt did not seek annexation of Arab states under its sovereignty. Yet, Egypt's national sovereign identity legitimized Egypt's intervention in domestic affairs of Arab states, including unseating hostile governments.

Arab unity meant, above all to him [Nasser], *the unification of the Arab struggle*; it meant 'to stand in one rank in face of imperialism'. When he preached Arab

⁸⁰ Nasser was explicit about Egypt's a-territorial role in the Middle East already in his 1953 book, *Faslfat althwara* (The Philosophy of the revolution):

I do not know why I always imagine that in this region in which we live there is a role wandering aimlessly about seeking an actor to play it. I do not know why this role, tired of roaming about in this vast region which extends to every place around us, should at last settle down, weary and worn out, on our frontiers beckoning us to move, to dress up for it and to perform it since nobody else who can do so.

Here I hasten to point out that this *role* is not a leading one. It is one of interplay of reactions and experiments with all these factors aiming at exploding this terrific energy latent in every sphere around us and at the creation, in this region, of a tremendous power capable of lifting this region up and making it play its positive role in the construction of the future and humanity... We, and only we, are impelled by our environment and are capable of *performing this role*" (Seale: 194; emphasis added).

unity before the union with Syria, he meant *Arab solidarity on foreign policy under Egyptian direction and not unity in any territorial or constitutional sense. He wished to control the foreign policy of his Arab neighbors—if necessary by unseating a hostile Government—but not to annex or merge with them.* (Seale: 312; emphasis added).

Nasser was very explicit in his view of Arab unity in an interview with *New York Times*:

When the Arab countries united, they were always be able to face and stop aggression... When the Arab peoples gave up their unity, they were an easy target for foreign control. The meaning of this is clear—to safeguard the Arab countries, there has to be one Arab front. For further definition, all Arab countries have to be independent and have to be far from foreign influence which divides up these countries in order to divert their attention. This, however, is one thing and constitutional considerations are another. As a matter of fact, we were surprised when we first had to deal with constitutional considerations, when unity took place between the two regions of the UAR... Once again, this does not necessarily mean that Arab unity means that all Arab countries should be combined in one country. What I care for is the creation of Arab solidarity as well as a unified Arab struggle because the Arab destiny and future are similar... The most important thing is that solidarity should prevail among Arab countries under any circumstances” (In Seale 225-226).

Kerr also asserts that “Nassir consistently affirmed that meaningful step toward Arab unity must be predicted on the underlying principle of self-determination.” Thus, he opposed Iraq’s plan to impose its sovereignty over Kuwait in the summer of 1961 for being an illegitimate act, which he called “annexation” (Kerr 1971: 20; in Lawson 2006: 144). The successor of Nasser, Anwar Sadat published a book titled the *Story of Arab Unity*, which published in December 1957, less than two months before the political union with Syria. The book, however, includes “no hint ...of the aspirations for territorial and political union” between Arab states (313).⁸¹

⁸¹ Mahmud Riad, Egyptian Ambassador in Damascus from 1955 till the establishment of the United Arab Republic (UAR) also emphasized this fact: “We [Egypt] never asked for union with Syria. We always argued that it was premature. We told each pressure group in favor of unity that we would always refuse a union brought about by force. We believed that it would never last if brought about by army” (Quoted in Seale: 314).

Nasser defined Arab unity not as threat to sovereignty but a mechanism to secure the true sovereignty and full independence of the Arab nation. For Nasser, the Arab unity was the foundation of true Arab sovereignty.

In his speech on the establishment of the United Arab Republic, Nasser asserts that Syria and Egypt “came to the conclusion that this *unity which is the fruit of Arab nationalism is the Arab’s path to sovereignty and freedom*” (Niva 212). He also adds that “the door is open for participating to any Arab state desirous of joining them in a union or federation for the purpose of protecting the Arab people from harm and evil, *strengthening Arab sovereignty*, and safeguarding its existence” (212-213; emphasis added).

Arab unity was a guarantee for full Arab independence, as Nasser puts it:

We shall proceed together, brethren, *united* as one man with one heart in order to achieve the principles of true dignity and true grandeur, and in order to establish throughout the Arab homeland and the Arab nation a *true political independence and a true economic independence*. (quoted in Seale 261; emphasis added)

Nasser searched for Arab unity in the sense of “Arab solidarity” and a “unified Arab struggle” was driven by “*the recognition of the essential unity of the struggle of the Arab states in the cause of total independence from their Great Powers mentors*” (Searle :313).

For Nasser, Arab nationalism was also the only path for the security of Arab states:

By Arab nationalism we mean that we should be independent and that independence is born of our conscience. We should no longer be in servitude to any other country or imperialism, any more than we should be a part of any sphere of influence. That is what *Arab nationalism: Arab nationalism is union, unity, solidarity, which should be erected on the rights, the interests of the Arabs and not on those of imperialism or spheres of influence...* that is why, from the very first day of this revolution, we were led to declare that *Arab nationalism constituted the only possible security for an Arab country*. We said that the

defense of the Arab nationalism should arise out of its own inner being and not from pacts dominated by Great Powers (Niva: 212).

But if Egypt did not seek territorial unity, why Nasser accepted the political unity with Syria in 1958? Nasser was

trapped by his role of champion of Arab rights and arbiter of Arab destinies: he so often urged the Arabs to unite behind him that now that a full-blooded political union was offered he could not retreat; it was too late to explain that by unity he had meant solidarity alone. (Seale 325)

Barnett provided a similar explanation:

Although he [Nasser] privately feared that this agreement would lead nowhere good, he felt that he had no choice but to follow his words with deeds. Nasser was not only a creator of the political agenda, he was also a creature of it. *As a hero who occupied a role in Arab politics, he would soon be captured by the normative expectations of that role*, and to deny the role would be to deny the very fabric of his leadership. (Barnett 1998: 121-122)

In his decision to accept the political unity with Syria, Nasser was driven by the “*will-to-manifest-identity*” more than the “*will-to-power*” (Bruce Hall 1999: 38-39). While Egypt’s “*will-to-power*” called for protecting the territorial status quo and rejecting the political unity with Syria, Egypt’s *will-to-manifest-identity* (national sovereign identity) trapped Egypt and Nasser in political unity that they did not desire. This is why Seale concludes that “United Arab Republic “was not a logical outcome of Egypt’s Arab policy; it shattered the territorial *status quo* which she had been at such pains to defend” (Seale: 314).

The behavior of Nasser reflects the effectiveness of national sovereignty on the state. As Young notes, the “effectiveness of an institution is determined by “the extent that its operation impels actors to behave differently than they would if the institution did

not exist or of some other institutional arrangement were put in its place” (Young 1992: 161)

The Arab States and Egypt’s National Sovereignty

Nasser’s view of Arab unity as mechanism to guarantee the full independence and true sovereignty of the Arab nation was not shared by all Arab states. King Hussain of Jordan rejected Nasser’s views portraying it as a new form of imperialism:

My own conception of Arab nationalism...is quite different from... Nasser’s...He believes that Arab nationalism can only be identified by a particular brand of Arab unity...I disagree...It is nothing more than a new form of imperialism, the domination of one state by another. (Walt 1987:213)

After allying with Egypt against Iraq and Jordan’s dynastic ambitions, Saudi Arabia saw Egypt’s national sovereign practices as a threat to the territorial status quo. Saudi Arabia continued in its fighting for protecting territorial sovereignty as the ordering principle of the Arab states system. Saudi Arabia’s role in protecting territorial sovereignty in the system originated long time before it became an oil exporter country. It was driven by its fear of Hashemite’s ambitions of annexing Saudi Arabia and greater Syria. The Ba’th of Syria, who pursued the political unity with Egypt, had much more ambitious goals than Nasser; they “were devoted to the pursuit of Arab unity: they envisaged the creation of a unitary Arab state” (Seale 310). Lebanon also rejected Egypt’s intervention in its internal affairs and it complained against UAR in the Arab League and the United Nations Security Council.

U.S. Secretary of States Allen Dulles also reflected on Nasser’s views of sovereignty:

Now the thing we are up against is a rather extreme view which the Arab countries in general, and Egypt in particular take on this thing which they call

nationalization and “sovereignty.” Nasser can hardly speak more than a couple of sentences but what he has to bring in “sovereignty”—“sovereignty”—they apparently conceive it as being the right to prove that you can step on other people’s toes with impunity. But we all know, who have some maturity in these matters, that sovereignty—its best expression involves harmonization of policies, coordinating them and working for the common good. But countries that have newly won their wings of independence incline toward taking initially an extreme view. They are hypersensitive about this thing. But it is so demonstrable that in the long run it is going to hurt Egypt and other Arab countries (Niva 1999: 163).

To sum this section, the above discussion shows that Nasser’s unity plans are completely different from Iraq and Jordan unity plans because they are originated from different sovereign identities, legitimating principles and roles. The behavioral difference between Egypt on the one hand and Iraq and Jordan under the Hasehmite on other, are explained as manifestation of the historically contingent notions of roles, practices and interests that derive from distinct sovereign identities and rules (dynastic vs. national sovereign identities).

The changes in Egypt’s policy after 1953 manifests changes in the collective sovereign identity of Egypt from territorial to national sovereignty. This change brought with it changes in the notion of sovereign role, national interest, and practices of Egypt.⁸² The changes in sovereign identity constitute changes in the system; “change in the international system occurs with changes in the collective identity of crucial social actors who collectively constitute the units from which the system is emerged” (Hall 1999: 28).

The Arab state system evolved from a system of dynastic sovereignty to a system of national sovereignty. As put by Bassam Tibi, the history of Arab nationalism can be looked at from two different perspectives. The first is the history of the ideas of Arab

⁸² For an excellent discussion of sovereign identities and their impact on state interests and behavior see Bruce Hall (1999).

nationalism (the perspective of his book), and the second perspective is the one that looks at Arab nationalism:

As an ideology of an evolving state system. In its earlier period (between the two World Wars) the Arab states system was royal in that it was carried out by dynasties. The Hashimites in Iraq and Jordan, the Saudis in Arabia and Muhammad 'Ali dynasty in Egypt were the Arab rulers. They were the champions of the search for Arab unity. The early Arab states system unfolded in the years 1945-54. With the rise of Nasserism (1952) this regional system assumed a populist character. The aspiration of a United Arab Kingdom that was born at the time of Sherif Hussain of Mecca switched into the claim for a United Arab Republic, as articulated by Nasser and realized in 1958. This change marks a transformation of Pan-Arabism from royalism to populism” (Tibi 1997: 203).

Iraq and Syria’s Geographical Sovereignty and Intervention

Iraq and Syria were also frequent interveners in the Arab state system after World War II. Iraq frequently intervened in Kuwait and Syria frequently intervened in Lebanon. Iraq and Syria even did not recognize the sovereignty of Kuwait and Lebanon respectively.

Iraq and Syria’s practices of non-recognition and intervention embodied their understandings of what constitute legitimate sovereign (who is legitimate sovereign? and how to fill the position of sovereign?). Their practices reflect the notion that historical geography is a legitimizing principle of sovereignty. Lebanon and Kuwait are not legitimate sovereignty because they were part of the historical geography of Iraq and Syria.

Iraq perceived Kuwait as part of its natural historical geography that was taken from Iraq by great powers. Thus, Iraq perceived its sovereign role to return the historical lands of Kuwait to Iraq. Similarly, Syria perceived Lebanon part of its historical land of Bilad Al-sham (Greater Syria) that taken from Syria by great power. Iraq and Syria did

not see Kuwait and Lebanon as legitimate sovereign states. They were perceived as illegitimate states and must be returned to their historical owners. Their practices of intervention and non-recognition were driven by their distinctive notion of sovereignty.

On June 19, 1961 Kuwait declared independence. Six days later, the Iraqi prime minister, General Abdul Al-Karim Kassem, held a press conference (25 June) in which he asserted:

The Iraqi Republic has decided to protect the Iraqi people in Kuwait and to demand all the land, arbitrarily held by imperialism, which belong to the district of Kuwait which is entirely associated with the province of Basra. The Iraqi republic will not ready to cede a single inch of this land. When we say this, it means that we can execute it. Accordingly, we will issue a republican decree appointing the present esteemed Shiekh of Kuwait as Qa'imaqam of the district of Kuwait, who shall come under the authority of the Basra province. We will warn the Sheikh of Kuwait not to act arbitrarily with regard to the right of the Kuwaiti people which is the right of the Iraqi people themselves. If this Sheikh misbehaves, then he will be severely punished and regarded as an insurgent.” (quoted in Zinadini 1977: 181).

Iraq even threatened to invade Kuwait but the existence of British and Arab league troops in Kuwait deterred Iraq from implementing its plan. Although Iraq recognized Kuwait after international pressure in 1963, Iraq continued to challenge Kuwait's independence until the invasion in 1990 (Miller 2007: 161,185-6).

Syria never recognized Lebanon as independent states. Until recently, Syria had no formal relations with Lebanon and it refused to open a Syrian embassy in Beirut. Syria perceive Lebanon as part of Greater Syria (*bilad al Sham*) as reflected in President Hafez Assad's remarks that Syrians and Lebanese “are one single people, one single nation...The feeling of kinship runs deeper than it does between states in the United States” (New York Times, 4 December 1983: A4; quoted in Drysdale 1994: 23). In September 1944 the Syrian Prime minister Sadallah al-Jabari also asserts Syria's policy

toward Lebanon: “As regards Lebanon the Syrian Government desire complete reunion or, if this is not possible, reduction of Lebanon to its original (i.e., pre-World War I) boundaries” (Porath 1984: 185-186).

The rest of Arab states did not recognize the legitimacy of Iraq and Syria’s sovereignty claims over Lebanon and Kuwait. Driven by fear, the rest of Arab states also intervened in Kuwait and Lebanon to protect the sovereignty of Lebanon and Kuwait, multiplying the acts of intervention in the system.

Sovereignty, Alliances, and Military Bases in the Arab State System

The Arab states did not even share the same meanings of legitimate roles of sovereignty when it comes to relations with great powers. Practices that were perceived by one state as a legitimate sovereign practice, others rejected it as a mere violation of state sovereignty.

The conflict over the 1955 Baghdad Pact is particularly illuminating. It illustrates the contested meanings on the roles and practices of sovereignty in the Arab state system. The Arab states struggled on defining whether strategic cooperation with great powers is a violation of sovereignty or not.

Iraq’s decision to join the strategic alliance with Western powers (Baghdad Pact) was condemned viciously by other Arab states especially Egypt. The Cairo based “Voice of the Arabs,” the mouthpiece of Nasser’s regime, reacted to the Baghdad Pact in the following words:

We regret to announce that a communique has been issued in Baghdad stating the Turkish-Iraqi alliance will be signed this evening and that the Iraqi Council of Ministers has consented the final of this alliance. Thus Nuri al-Sa’id, rejecting the unanimous decision of the Arab people, concluded an alliance with the Turks, the enemies of Arabism, friends of Zionism—an alliance which will destroy Iraq’s

aspirations to freedom, Palestine's hopes of independence, and the Arabs' hope of unity, integrity and glory. The 'Voice of the Arabs', which has resisted this alliance, declares to the entire world that the people of Iraq disown this alliance and that the chains imposed by it on the noble people of Iraq tie only Nuri al-Sa'id. The people of Iraq are not bound by this alliance; they have not signed it and will not sign it; they curse it and they will destroy this filthy piece of paper, the Nuri-Menderes alliance. (quoted in Seale 222-223)

Egypt's rejection of the Baghdad Pact reflects its view of non-alignment as the main guarantee of state sovereignty and independence (Seale: 199). Nasser repeatedly link non-alignment with sovereignty: "*Our participation in any pact would destroy our sovereignty*, would make us followers in regards to our foreign policy and would completely destroy Arab nationalism" (quoted in Niva: 4). In another speech, Nasser repeated the same principle, "I am against the alignment of Arab countries with any big powers. Such an alignment could open the door for the big powers to become dominant and *to bring back imperialism* and colonialism to the Arab lands" (quoted in Niva: 205; emphasis added).

On the other hand, Iraq insisted that participation in strategic alliance with Western powers is necessary for the protection of its sovereignty. In his meeting with Nasser on 15 September 1954, Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Said stated:

I cannot depend on the Arabs to defend my country. If I tell my people and my foreign friends that I am going to depend on the Syrian, Saudi, and Lebanese armies to defend Iraq, they will say "Nuri, you are fool!" The only way to defend my country is to make an alliance with the West. (Seale: 207; emphasis added)

He also asserted that the Arab Collective Security pact is "mere ink on paper, and another means [of defense] must be found" (Seale: 208).

Nuri Al-Said added another justification for his country alliance with great powers. "if we can prove to the West that we have a constructive and affirmative policy,

its attitude towards us will change. *If we remain idle, the West will overpower us and meddle with our rights and interests*” (Niva: 208; emphasis added).

Iraq also rejected Egypt’ views of the Baghdad Pact as interference into its domestic affairs. In his meeting with an Arab League delegation who visited Baghdad in January 1955 to solve the conflict between Egypt and Iraq over Baghdad Pact, Nuri told the Arab delegation before boarding the airplane back to Cairo, “I am not a soldier in Abed al-Nasir’s army. Please tell him that I will never obey his orders” (Seale: 217). In response to Egypt’s interference, the government of Iraq issued an official statement emphasizing that “no one could dictate conditions to Iraq for cooperation” (quoted in Niva: 207).

Iraq and Egypt competed against each other on convincing the rest of Arab states to join them. Syria was divided with no clear role and voice (Barentt 1998: 113). Saudi Arabia supported Nasser out of fear of Hashemite expansionist policies. Lebanon was neutral on this issue. The Lebanese Prime minister even commented that he “could not see what the fuss was all about” as Iraq was already a party to strategic alliances in 1937 and 1948 (Ibid).

Jordan already had strategic alliance with great powers and wanted to join the Baghdad Pact. King Hussain feared the public reaction but after hesitation Jordan signed the Baghdad pact. Nasser, in reaction, mobilized the streets of Jordan against their King. Consequently, major riots erupted in the streets of Jordan by “Hundreds of thousands of Jordanians listening avidly to the propaganda on Cairo Radio, saw in Nasser a sort of mystical savior,” as reflected by King Hussain himself afterwards (quoted in Barnett: 117).

Obviously there was a conflict on determining whether strategic relation with Western powers is a violation of state sovereignty or not. While some adopted non-alignment as a guarantee of their sovereignty, other states adopted strategic relations with great powers as an expression as well as protection of their sovereignty. Instead of acting upon the rules of sovereignty, the Arab states were engaged in a conflict on defining the legitimate rules, roles and practices of sovereignty. The Arab states did not even hold shared meanings on whether military bases are a violation of state sovereignty or not.

After the end of Second World War, Britain tried to maintain its strategic position in the Middle East and North Africa through extraterritorial jurisdiction. London sought to maintain military bases in the Arab states and it did not view her military bases as violation of state sovereignty. British officials tried to convince their Arab counterparts that extraterritorial jurisdiction and military bases did not constitute violation of sovereignty of the new Arab states.

The reaction of the Arab states was anything but united. There was no consensus between Arab states on the relations between British extraterritoriality and state sovereignty.

On the one side, Egypt under Nasser rejected Britain's extraterritorial jurisdiction as a mere imperialism and called for the complete evacuation of the British forces from Canal Suez. Egypt appealed to the United Nation Security Council, asserted that British troops inside the borders of Egypt constitute "an offense to [Egypt's] dignity, a hindrance to its normal development, as well as infringement on the fundamental principles of sovereign equality" (quoted in Niva: 178).

In his speech after the nationalization of the Suez Canal, Nasser cheerfully declared that “*Today, we actually achieve true sovereignty, true dignity and true pride*” (quoted in Niva: 201; emphasis added). Nasser nationalized the canal partly in response to the conditions that the United States and Britain attempted to impose on Egypt in return of providing financial support to Aswan High Dam. Egypt perceived the political conditions for economic support as a threat to Egypt’s “independence” as put by the ‘Voice of the Arabs’:

No one would refuse honest aid from abroad; but the Arabs can do without any pennies and bullets which bring enslavement and put back the cloak of Arab progress. Aid of this kind is not based on respect for mutual interest and for the rights of people to freedom and independence. This, O Arabs, is the policy of Egypt. (quoted in Seale: 197)⁸³

Egypt’s rejection of conditional foreign aid reflected its views of sovereignty. The Arab news agency reported on 27 January 1953 that the new leaderships sent guidelines to Egypt’s ambassadors around the world that Egypt neutrality principles means that Egypt “*refuse to accept ‘any sort of cooperation other than one based on a full recognition of her rights, sovereignty, and national prestige’* (quoted in Seale 195; emphasis added).

On the other hands, Jordan and Iraq did not perceive the presence of British troops on their soil as a violation of sovereignty. In response to regional criticism against the Anglo-Jordan treaty of alliance on March 22, 1946, the King of Jordan asserted that the treaty did not compromise Jordan’s sovereignty:

⁸³ Egypt’s view of conditional foreign aid and sovereignty has changed since Nasser regime. In the later 1980s and early 1990s Egypt received conditional loans from the IMF and the World Bank with conditions of structural adjustment programs.

The new Treaty has recognized our complete independence and that the alliance to be exclusively defensive and within the limits of Security Council, without the stationing of any British troops except by agreement between the two parties and in the case of defensive exigencies. (quoted in Niva: 176).

In contrast to Egypt policies, the rulers of the Arab kingdom in the Gulf actually asked Britain to keep its forces within their borders. When Britain decided to withdraw militarily from the Gulf by the end of 1971 partly due to financial constraints:

In response, Shaykh Zayed, the ruler of Abu Dhabi, told a British emissary that he and his fellow rulers would be willing to bear the entire cost of British military presence in the area. Shaykh Rashid of Dubai seconded Zayid's offer. Moreover, Saudi Arabia, worried about the spread of radical ideologies that had blossomed in newly independent South Yemen, conveyed to London its willingness to help fund a continued British presence. (Gause 2010: 18-19)

In contrast to Egypt, the Arab regimes in the Gulf did not see the British forces on their territories as a violation of their sovereignty and independence.

In conclusion, different Arab states were driven by different meanings of legitimate sovereignty. Dynastic, national, Geographical and territorial sovereign rules constituted different roles and practices, which were in conflict with each other.

The emergence of conflicting meanings of sovereignty in the Arab state system was partly constituted by the inherent ambiguity of the institution of sovereignty itself, the limited socializing power of international society after World War II, and the mere fact that Arab states were in early stages in the process of sovereign role acquisition (see Chapter Three).

Thus, the structure of the Arab state system was filled not in shared inter-subjective institution of sovereignty but conflict meanings of sovereignty, including conflict meanings of legitimate position, roles, and practices of sovereignty. The foundational institution of sovereignty, which is often the starting point in IR theory, was

in fact severely contested in the Arab state system. The units of the Arab state system were involved in a conflict over defining the foundational institution of sovereignty.

The absence of shared meanings of sovereignty and the dominance of national, dynastic and geographical sovereignty constituted the high frequency of intervention in the Arab state system from the end of World War II to 1970s. But the Arab state system was embedded in a distinctive international society that also contributed to the frequency of intervention in the regional Arab state system.

Sovereignty and Intervention in International System

The international context within which Egypt under Nasser intervened in other Arab states was not very different from the interwar international system. Even after the end of World War II, the norms of territorial sovereignty and non-intervention did not reach the stage of high level of inter-subjectivity—high level of internalization. Both the rules and the practices of international system embodied that territorial sovereignty and non-intervention were still far away from being a highly consolidated norm in international system.

The United Nation Charter did NOT explicitly address the issue of non-intervention as vividly put by R.J. Vincent, “Nowhere in the Charter is the principle of non-intervention explicitly laid down as a rule governing the relations between the members of the United Nation” (1974: 234).

The Charter, interestingly enough, is not a very satisfactory instrument when it comes to the problem of intervention, because it deals with it in a very limited way. It concerns itself first of all only with certain types of action. What it bans is the use of force and threat of force...[but] there are many other ways of intervening, in which force, or even the threat of force remain implicit, below its visible surface. Furthermore, the Charter only aims at protecting the territorial integrity and political independence of a state; it does not deal with other ways of

undermining the state, such as trying to change the nature of its government. (Hoffman 1984: 20-21)⁸⁴

Stanley Hoffman concluded that the attempt to control intervention by international law and the United Nations Charter in the post-World War II era actually “failed” (Ibid). In terms of practices, the international system also experienced high frequency of external intervention as evidenced in the International Military Intervention (IMI) dataset (Pickering and Kisangani 2009, Pearson and Baumann 1993) and Overt Military Intervention data set (Tillema 1989).

In other words, the practices of intervention in the Arab state system was not an exceptional Arab norm. In fact, the international system itself also experienced high frequency of intervention after World War II. This is important observation because the alternative accounts asserted that the high frequency of intervention in the Arab state system was exceptional and different from the norm and practice of intervention in international system.

Following World War II, the norm of territorial sovereignty was not a universal ordering principle. Even in the late 1950s, the principle of territorial sovereignty was far from being universal:

The imperial powers were convinced as late as the 1950s that they would remain in parts of Africa for many years to come. In 1954 a mission of the U.N. Trusteeship Council reported that Tanganyika (Tanzania) could be independent in 20 years... In the mid-1950s, Guinea, Cote d’Ivoire, Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), and other territories that comprised French West Africa were conceived by a leading scholar as emergent *local government* rather than candidates for sovereign statehood. Until 1956 the French African territories were moving towards

⁸⁴ “The Charter is based on a model which draws a sharp distinction between external and domestic affairs; the evil against which it is supposed to operate is that of the massive crossing of established borders by armies; and that has not been the main problem [i.e. intervention] of post war international relations.” (Hoffman 1984: 21).

integration within the French empire... The political imagination did not easily visualize colonies as states, certainly not all of them, and independent came as a surprise to many. (Jackson and Rosberg 1986: 8)

After World War II, territorial integrity norm was still in the early period of its acceptance stage (not consolidation stage):

The acceptance stage of [territorial integrity] norm development began with the adoption of Article 2(4) in the UN Charter in June 1945, and it lasted until the mid-1970s. It was not until the 1960s and early 1970s that broad and strong backing for the norm became palpable. (Zacher 2001: 236-237)

It is important to emphasize this was the international context (treaties and practices) within which Jamal Abed Nasser became the president of Egypt; this was the international context when Egypt adopted national sovereignty in 1953 and interfered in domestic affairs of other Arab states. This was the international context within which Syria claims its sovereignty right over Lebanon and Iraq claimed its sovereignty rights over Kuwait. This was the international context within which Arab states intervened in each other's internal affairs.

This was the international context within which the Arab states were engaged in "Negotiations in Arab Politics" and debating Pan-Arabism-sovereignty relations (Barnett 1998). This was the international context within which the Arab states were involved in the Arab Cold War (Kerr 1964) and Balance of the Threat politics (Walt 1987). Overlooking the limited institutional power of territorial sovereignty and non-intervention in the international system risk a misleading account of sovereignty and intervention in the Arab state system.

International society is the *international* stage or theater, where new Arab states look at to learn how old states perform the roles of sovereignty. But the theater of

international system clearly shows that territorial sovereignty and non-intervention were far from being hegemonic inter-subjective norm. The old members (old states) of international society were engaged in conflict on the legitimate meanings of the roles of sovereignty (France and Britain repeatedly tried to keep some extraterritorial rights which were rejected by the U.S. and U.S.S.R). The old members of the international society were also involved in many external interventions. Also the United Nations Charter did not prescribe clear and coherent roles of non-intervention during this period. The principle of territorial sovereignty was not universal at that time as African continent was still under European colonialism.

The international society did not prescribe clear and coherent roles to new Arab states (role prescription and role ambiguity); the international society did not perform clear and coherent roles of territorial sovereignty and non-intervention (role performance) and thus the international society had limited power to socialize the Arab states (role socialization) to internalize the appropriate roles of territorial sovereignty and non-intervention. For, there were no such appropriate roles of territorial sovereignty and non-intervention at the time. At the same time, the Arab states were still in the early stages of their acquisition process of the roles of sovereignty (role acquisition) and they were embedded in domestic and regional institutions (Dynastic, national, and geographical sovereignty) that prescribed behavioral roles that were in conflict with the roles prescribed by territorial sovereignty and non-intervention.

In the analysis of why Africa's weak states persist, Jackson and Rosberg emphasize the role of international society in supporting African states and they highlight the historical fact that "the African states all became independent at a time when

international society was highly organized and integrated” (1982: 20). But, in contrast to the African states, most Arab states became independent when the international society was neither organized nor integrated.

The literature on Arab politics has overlooked international society (particularly international norms); instead, the literature adopted the realist’s definition of international structure (international polarity and anarchy). The above discussion clearly shows that international normative structure is too important to be ignored in our analysis of inter-Arab politics. Focusing on polarity and anarchy cannot capture the above international normative context within which the Arab states were embedded. The above discussion clearly illustrate that the international normative structure did not impose robust constraints against the acts of intervention following World War II.

Thus, imposing an ideal type of territorial sovereignty and non-intervention in regional Arab state system and international system instead of exploring their level of institutionalization distorts rather than illuminates the inter-Arab politics following the end of World War II.

The above discussion also makes its crystal clear that the alternative accounts that explain the political disorder and intervention in the Arab state system following World War II by merely sovereignty-Pan Arabism conflict distort the history of Arab politics. They impose a timeless meaning of sovereignty, a fixed meaning of Pan-Arabism without exploring the actual historical norms and practices of sovereignty, pan-Arabism, and intervention in the Arab state system and international system.

Sovereignty's Complementary Institution: Inter-State Borders in the Arab State System

The institution of interstate borders was still a new institution as many of the Arab states received independence after World War II. The low level of institutionalization of inter-state borders increased the acts of intervention.

The low level of institutionalization of inter-state borders was featured in the prominent historian Roger Owen's generalization on inter-Arab politics. According to Owen, there was

a general assumption that boundaries are porous and that neighbors will attempt to interfere. This forces regimes to be much warier than they might otherwise be, and, often, to try to preempt such interference by making a first move themselves. More generally, this assumption has often led to attempts to weaken a troublesome neighbor as a way of reducing its capacity to make trouble... the close involvement with events and processes across Arab borders means that there is less of a difference between domestic and foreign policy than in other parts of the world. Regimes habitually attempt to find support, and even legitimacy, across such borders while having to pay close attention to rival attempts to do just the same. (Owen 2004: 66-67)

Elsewhere, Owen emphasized that the Arab state system experiences what he calls "habitual willingness to acts across international borders that seemed unparalleled elsewhere in the non-European world (Owen 2004: 66).

The practice of territoriality was new practice in Arab politics. The tradition of non-territorial politics including the absence of political borders is manifested in early years of Arabism. Both territoriality in general and political borders in particular are absent in the definition of Arabism.

For Sati Al Husri, the preeminent theorist of Arab nationalism, "every person who speaks Arabic is an Arab. Everyone who is affiliated with these people is an Arab".

For Charles Malik, “The word “Arab” denotes neither a race nor a religion. For the most part, its connotation is “Arabic Speaking.” For George Antonious,

The connotation of the word *Arab* changed accordingly. It is no longer used solely to denote a member of the nomad tribes who peopled the Arabian Peninsula. It gradually came to mean a citizen of that extensive Arab world—not any inhabitant of it, but that great majority whose racial descent, even when it was not of pure Arab lineage, had become submerged in the tide of Arabisation; whose manners and traditions had been shaped in an Arab mold; and most decisive of all, whose mother tongue is Arabic. The term applies to Christians as well as to Moslems, and to the off-shoots of each of these creeds, the criterion being not Islamisation but the degree of Arabisation (quoted in Chalala 1987: 20-21).

This non-territorial definition is reflected in the practice of the pan Arabism movement at least in its early stages when its main concern was with the status of Arab language and culture within the Ottoman Empire; it did not even ask for territorial and political independence from the Ottoman Empire. “The demand of pre- 1913 Arab nationalists did not go beyond the call for local and cultural autonomy within the confines of Ottomanism” (Tibi: 1997: 16-17).

The territorial concept of “The Arab Homeland” is actually a new concept that did not exist before 1950s:

[The] supranational entity like the Arab Homeland is not a naturally existing territory waiting to be defined and labeled; but instead it is a complex and fluid construct that is intimately linked to a variety of geopolitical and cartographic discourses. . . . Since the 1950s, maps have helped to discursively create the Arab Homeland as a unified supranational Arab territory. But the emphasis on Arab unity is not isolated to maps. Instead, the clear demarcation of the territory and the adoption of the label “Arab Homeland” are part of wider geopolitical discourses and practices. The cartographic creation of this territory emerged in the 20th century as the pan-Arab movement gained strength against Ottoman, British and French imperial powers. . . . The Arab Homeland as supranational discursive construct because it is part of broader geopolitical discourses that have attempted to unite the entirety of national entities into one territory (and less so because it is a place of political networks or economic relations like the EU). (Culcasi, 2011: 421, 426, 418-419).

Borders suffer from low level of institutionalization not because they divided the Arab nation but rather because they were a new practice of politics. They suffer from low level of institutionalization because they were new institution that has yet to reach its high level of institutionalization. This is what constituted intervention.

In the next chapter, I will turn to discuss sovereignty and intervention after 1970s. I will show that Arab state system experienced significant change in its institutions of sovereignty and inter-state borders, constituting significant decline in acts of external intervention. I will also show that this regional transformation is partly constituted by major normative changes in international system.

PART IV: SOVEREIGNTY AND INTERVENTION IN THE ARAB
STATE SYSTEM 1970S-2014

CHAPTER SEVEN: STATE-TERRITORIAL SOVEREIGNTY AND INTERVENTION: THE ARAB STATE SYSTEM 1970S-2011

The Arab state system experienced significant decline in the practices of intervention after 1970s. Multiple causes at the domestic, regional and international levels contributed to this important change.⁸⁵ In this chapter, I will focus exclusively on the distinctive contribution of my three institutional variables: sovereignty in the Arab state system, sovereignty in the international system, and level of institutionalization of inter-state borders in the Arab state system. Changes in these three institutional variables, I argue, constituted the decline in the practices of intervention in the Arab state system.

Sovereignty and Intervention in the Arab State System

Changes in the dominant norms of sovereignty in the Arab state system constituted the decline in the practices of intervention. More specifically, the decline in national, geographical, and dynastic sovereignty and the rise of state-territorial sovereignty constituted the decline in the acts of intervention in the Arab state system.

The rise of state-territorial sovereignty and the decline of national, dynastic, and geographical sovereignty in the Arab state system was a *gradual* process that began in early 1960s and reached its zenith in 1980s. This was an evolutionary change not revolutionary change.⁸⁶ In other words, the change in the normative structure of the

⁸⁵ See literature review chapter.

⁸⁶ On revolutionary and evolutionary change in international politics see Gilpin (1981).

Arab state system—norms of sovereignty—took place over extended period of time. This complicated process should not be reduced to single events such as 1973 oil boom or 1967 Six Days War even though these two factors contributed to the consolidation of state-territorial sovereignty

At the end of this gradually transitional process, the principle of state-territorial sovereignty, which was supported by the weakest Arab states, Lebanon and Kuwait in particular, became the dominant institution in the Arab state system. National, geographical and dynastic sovereignties, which were promoted by the strongest Arab states, eventually disappeared from inter-Arab relations.

Put differently, state-territorial sovereignty that was advocated by the weakest states in the regional state system became the hegemonic rules of the game; whereas, national, dynastic, and geographical sovereignty that were supported by the strongest states in the system disappeared. Obviously, the realist's variable of distribution of power cannot explain this change in the rules of sovereignty in the Arab state system.

The practices of intervention declined because the newly dominant institution of state-territorial sovereignty prescribed distinctive roles of intervention and non-intervention that strongly respected international borders and territorial jurisdictions of supreme authority.⁸⁷ The consolidation of state-territorial sovereignty and its associated role of intervention and non-intervention constituted the decline in the acts of external intervention in the Arab state system. Change in the normative structure—norms of

⁸⁷ As explained in Chapter Four, each of dynastic, national, territorial, geographical and popular sovereignty prescribes distinctive role of intervention and non-intervention. The behavioral expectations regarding intervention and non-intervention are constituted by the dominant type of sovereignty in the system.

sovereignty—of the Arab state system is what constituted change in the acts of intervention in the Arab state system.

The changes in the norms of sovereignty are embodied in the various discursive and empirical practices of the Arab states. The consolidation of state-territorial sovereignty is embodied, for example, in the end of the competition between Arab states on the position of “Arab leadership”, which was a common practice in previous decades. Beginning in mid-1960s, “Arab leadership suddenly ceased to be a plausible ambition” in inter-Arab politics (Kerr 1970: 129). While the competition over the position of the leader of the Arab people was a feature of dynastic and national sovereign practices in previous decades, the end of this competition in inter-Arab politics reflect the new status of state-territorial sovereignty.

The consolidation of state-territorial sovereignty is also embodied in the decline of political unity plans that driven by dynastic and national legitimating principles. “Unification had already dropped off the political agenda by 1964,” wrote Michael Barnett (1998: 163). “By the mid-1960s pan-Arabism had lost its luster,” even long before the 1967 war (162).

The Arab states explicitly reaffirmed the principle of non-intervention in 1965 Arab summit. The resolutions of this summit “called on Arab states to cease their propaganda wars and to recognize the principle of non-interference” (167).

The Arab states strongly reaffirmed the principle of state-territorial sovereignty and non-intervention in the famous Khartoum Summit in 1967 in which

the Arab states agreed to recognize each other’s sovereignty and the legitimacy of the separate Arab experiments, and they furthered the prospect of cooperation by

pledging that they would desist from attempts to destabilize each other from within through their media. (167)

The Arab leaders also reaffirmed the resolution of 1965 summit on non-intervention. During the summit, Egypt and Saudi Arabia also signed an agreement to end their military intervention in Yemen. Nasser even decided to close down the *Sawt al-Arab* [Voice of the Arabs] radio broadcast.

During the Khartoum summit, many Arab states emphasized the principles of “co-existence” and “coordination” rather than “unification” and “integration” among Arab states (Barnett 1998: 166-67; 170-171).

“What occurred in Khartoum was the birth of a new order . . . The Arab states reiterated that sovereignty was the foundation of the Arab order,” wrote Barnett (1998: 170; emphasis added). Obviously, Barnett refers to state-territorial sovereignty. By the conclusion of Khartoum summit, “the normative landscape had irrevocably changed” in the Arab state system (Burgis 2009: 74). The emerging order regulated “inter-Arab relations on the principle of state sovereignty” (Dawisha 2003: 286). “By September and summit’s conclusion, the normative landscape had irrevocably changes: Waraniyya, or state-based nationalism, had been “consecrated as the dominant ideology, regulating inter-Arab relations on the principle of state sovereignty” (Burgis: 74).

The process of consolidation of state-territorial sovereignty continued in 1970s as embodied in the Jordanian civil war, the Black September in 1970, when the ruling Hashemite regime launched a military attack against the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) within its territory.

King Hussein justified his military attacks against the Palestinian militias by the principle of territorial-state sovereignty: “The State will exercise its full sovereignty over everyone present on its territory. All shall respect that sovereignty” (Barnett 1998: 180).

All Arab states, except Syria,⁸⁸ decided not to intervene militarily in Jordan’s domestic affairs. Instead, the Arab leaders, including the king of Jordan, convened in Cairo on September 22 to solve the conflict between Jordan and the PLO. Noticeably, the Arab leaders repeatedly emphasized the legitimacy of state-territorial sovereignty during the summit. Even Nasser himself called for the respect and protection of Jordan’s sovereignty, a regime that Nasser himself repeatedly tried to overthrow in previous decades. On September 27 the PLO and Jordan signed the Cairo Agreement that ended the military conflict.

Following the 1973 war, Arab states signed separate cease-fire agreements with Israel, which implicitly recognize the territorial-state sovereignty of Israel. Egypt went much further by signing a separate peace agreement with Israel. The act was condemned mostly by Syria and Iraq. But most of the Arab states respected Egypt decision based on the principle of state-territorial sovereignty.

Saudi Arabia, the strongest Arab state in 1970s, responded to Egypt separate peace negotiations with Israel that Saudi Arabia did “not give itself the right to interfere in the private affairs of any Arab country, nor to dispute its right to restore its occupied territories through armed struggle or through peaceful efforts insofar as that does not

⁸⁸ Syria’s military intervention in Jordan was very short—only three days. Syrian forces crossed the border with Jordan on September 19 and retreated on September 22. Syria intervention was condemned by other Arab states including President Nasser.

clash with the higher Arab interests” (Barnett 1998: 193). Yet this did not prevent the radical Arab states to expel Egypt from the Arab League in response to its peace agreement with Israel.

During the 1980s, we also notice reaffirmation of state-territorial sovereignty and non-intervention. The draft protocol of the 1985 Arab summit, for example, asserts that

Each Arab country will pledge to respect the system of rule in other Arab countries, not to interfere in the domestic affairs of other Arab countries, and refrain from assisting any elements that act against the sovereignty, independence, and safety of the territory of any other Arab country. (Barnett 1998: 205)

The Arab League even decided to accept the new membership of Egypt in 1987 despite Egypt’s peace agreement with Israel. In his first speech at an Arab summit, Egypt’s president Hosni Mubarak explicitly asserts the principle of non-intervention in inter-Arab affairs:

We should be strictly committed to the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of each other, because the people of each country knows [sic] better than others what realizes their own interests and are more capable of defining their path at the internal level. It is unfeasible that we be enthusiastic in proposing this principle in the sphere of international relations only to be incapable of honoring it and consolidating it in our narrower pan-Arab sphere in which there are common interests unavailable in the wider international circles (Barnett 1998: 207).

As a result of consolidation of state-territorial sovereignty, the normative structure of the Arab state system became inter-subjective. The norms of sovereignty, which are elements of the structure of Arab state system, became inter-subjective. In comparison, the normative structure of the Arab state system between 1920s and 1960s was characterized by competing norms of sovereignty rather than inter-subjective norms of sovereignty. This change in the quality of the structure reduced structural causes of fear and uncertainty as well as intervention driven by fear and uncertainty.

This change in the normative structure of the Arab state system (inter-subjective norm of sovereignty instead of competing norms of sovereignty) reflected the new understandings among Arab leaders that “without an agreement on the basic rules of the game Arab politics would only fragment further... Absent some general norms to guide their relations in ways that might encourage cooperation, Arab states were likely to orient their policies in disconnected directions (205). Regional “Order would be possible only after collective meaning was established” (Adler and Hass, 1992: 368 in Barnett 289). To contain inter-Arab conflicts and establish regional order, the Arab states established “some rules of the game that were virtually synonymous with international society” (Barnett 1998: 204).

During this period the norms of sovereignty in the Arab state system became similar to the norms of sovereignty in international system. “Arab states once forwarded pan-Arab ideals as the inspiration for cooperation; now they were looking to base their cooperation on norms that were indistinguishable from those of international society,” concluded Barnett his discussion of the political order in the Arab state system between 1967 and 1990 (204).

There are multiple causes of the simultaneous rise of state-territorial sovereignty and decline of dynastic, national and geographical sovereignty in the Arab state system. There is no one single magic cause of this significant change. As explicitly put by Michael Barnett, “reductionism is to be avoided when searching for the ingredients of macro historical change,” referring to the consolidation of state-territorial sovereignty in the Arab states system (Barnett 1998: 209).

Combination of domestic, regional and international forces caused this historical transformation in the rules and practices of sovereignty in the Arab state system. Yet, I argue that changes in norms and practices of sovereignty in international system as well as change in the level of institutionalization in interstate borders in the Middle East played a major role in consolidating state-territorial sovereignty and its associated role of non-intervention in the Arab state system.

Sovereignty and Intervention in International System

Interestingly, the norms and practices of sovereignty in international society are ignored in the literature on the consolidation of state-territorial sovereignty in the Arab world. The relevant literature either ignores the international context utterly or addresses only some aspects of the international context—anarchy, polarity, and great powers.

But the regional Arab state system is and has always been embedded not in international anarchy but in an international society with distinctive norms and practices. The international norms and practices of international society have considerable impact on domestic and regional orders. They empower some states and constrain others in regional systems. International norms also empower and/or constrain great powers involvement in regional politics.

The importance of international system to state sovereignty is acknowledged by numerous scholars from multiple disciplines. Charles Tilly, for example, argues that “the later the state-making experience...the less likely...internal processes...are to provide an adequate explanation for the formation, survival or growth of a state” (Tilly 1975: 46). Evidently, the Arab states were among the latest new comers into the current

international system, which requires serious consideration of the role of external processes in the formation, survival, growth of the Arab state.

Anthony Giddens also emphasizes the importance of international system to state sovereignty:

The sovereign power of modern states was not formed prior to their involvement in the nation-state system, even in the European state system, but developed in conjunction with it. Indeed, the sovereignty of the modern state was from the first *dependent upon the relations between states*. (Giddens 2002: 61)⁸⁹

David Strang also argues, “states are not individually empowered as sovereign actors... who then establish relations with each other. Rather, notions of sovereignty imply a state society founded on mutual recognition” (1991: 148). Similarly, Barkin and Cronin also assert, “the sovereignty of the nation-state does not precede the development of the state system” (1994:110).

The Middle East is by no means an exception. The Arab state system is anything but independent sub-system as put by Fred Halliday:

Every phase of the international history of the Middle East, from the assault of Catherine the Great in the 1760s and Napoleon’s occupation of Egypt in 1798, to Iraq war of 2003, raises the issue of *how*, and *how far*, external factors determine the politics and society of the region. The character and history of this external involvement in the Middle East, and the impact of this on the Middle Eastern politics and society, posed questions that go to the heart of analyzing the modern international system and socio-economic character of the region. (2005: 162)

Changes in the norms and practices of sovereignty in the international system, I argue, constituted the consolidation of state-territorial sovereignty and its associated role of non-

⁸⁹ Elsewhere Giddens also claims “‘International Relations’ are not connections set up between preestablished states which could maintain their sovereignty without them: they are the basis upon which nation-states exist at all” (1987: 263).

intervention in the Arab state system. The normative change in international system constituted the shift to state-territorial sovereignty in the Arab state system.

The norms and practices of territorial sovereignty and non-intervention were still far away from being universal inter-subjective norms in international society until late 1950s.⁹⁰ But beginning in early 1960s the international society experienced major transformation in the norms and practices of sovereignty, altering the international structure within which the Arab states were embedded.

The international norm of state-territorial sovereignty and its associated role of non-intervention entered the consolidation stage in early 1960s and reached their zenith in mid 1970s, when state-territorial sovereignty and its associated role of non-intervention reached their highest level of inter-subjectivity—highest level of institutionalization.

During this period, the international society experienced the following changes in its normative structure:

- Consolidation and globalization (universalization) of state-territorial sovereignty as ordering principle of international society.
- Consolidation and globalization of the role of non-intervention as prescribed by territorial state sovereignty.
- Consolidation and globalization of territorial integrity norm.

The significant transformation in the structure of international society is embodied in both formal treaties as well international practices. Beginning in early 1960s, the

⁹⁰ See Chapters 5 and 6.

international society signed multiple treaties that explicitly endorsed state-territorial sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-intervention as the new rules of the game in international politics:

- United Nations General Assembly **Declarations on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples**⁹¹ (1960). Article 6, in particular, proclaims “any attempt at the partial or whole disruption of the national unity and territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations” (Article 6). Article 7 also states that

all States observe faithfully and strictly the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the present Declaration on the basis of equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of all States, and their territorial integrity.
- **Organization of African Union Charter** (1963). It proclaims strong support to territorial integrity and non-intervention. Article 3, in particular, emphasizes that member states “solemnly affirm and declare their adherence to “non-interference in the internal affairs of States” and “Respect to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State and for its inalienable right to independent existence.”
- Organization of African Union **Cairo Declaration** (1964) also provided support to territorial integrity. It proclaims, “the borders of African states, on the day of their independence, constitute a tangible reality.” It also “solemnly declare that all Member States pledge themselves to respect the borders existing on their achievement of national independence” (Jackson 1987: 524-525).

⁹¹ UN General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV), December 14 1960.

- United Nations General Assembly Declaration on Inadmissibility of Intervention in Domestic Affairs of States and Protection of their Independence and

Sovereignty (1965).⁹² It states that

no state has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatever, in the internal or external affairs of any other state. Consequently, armed intervention and all other forms of interference or attempted threats against the personality of the State or against its political, economic and cultural elements, are condemned. (Article 1)

Article 2 also proclaims that

no State may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights or to secure from its advantages of any kind. Also, no State shall organize, assist, foment, finance, incite or tolerate subversive, terrorist or armed activities directed towards the violent overthrow of the regime of another State, or interfere in civil strife in another State.

- **UN Security Council Resolution 242**⁹³ (1967) explicitly emphasizes “the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war.”
- United Nations General Assembly Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation Among States in Accordance with the Charter of the United Nations⁹⁴ (1970): It notes that “the Principle Concerning the duty not to intervene in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of any state, in accordance with the Charter.” It proclaims that

no State or group of States has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatever, in the internal or the external affairs of any other

⁹² UN General Assembly Resolution 2131 (XX), December 21, 1965.

⁹³ UN Security Council Resolution 242 “the Situation in the Middle East,” November 22, 1967. It was made after the 1967 war between Israel and Arab states.

⁹⁴ UN General Assembly Resolution, 2625 (XXV), October 24, 1970.

State. Consequently, armed intervention and all other forms of interference or attempted threats against the personality of the State or against its political, economic, and cultural elements, are in violation of international law.

It also asserts

every State has the duty to refrain in its international relations from the threat of use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State...Such a threat of use of force constitutes a violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations and she never be employed as a means of settling international issues.

- United Nation General Assembly **Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security** (1970)⁹⁵ “solemnly reaffirms that states must fully respect the sovereignty of other states.” It also “solemnly reaffirms that every State has the duty to refrain from the threat of use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of any other state.”
- **Helsinki Final Act** (1975) also asserts

the participating States will refrain from any intervention, direct or indirect, individual or collective in the internal or external affairs falling within the domestic jurisdiction of another participating State, regardless of their mutual relations.

It also proclaims:

the participating States will respect each other’s sovereign equality and individuality we well as all the rights inherent in and encompassed by its sovereignty, including in particular the right of every State to juridical equality, to territorial integrity and to freedom and political independence.

In addition, “Frontiers can [only] be changed, in accordance with international law, by peaceful means and by agreement.”⁹⁶

⁹⁵ UN General Assembly Resolution 2734 (XXV), December 16, 1970.

⁹⁶ Signed on August 1, 1975.

The above formal international treaties were accompanied and followed by practices on the ground that embodied the changes in the status of state-territorial sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention. The number of sovereign-territorial states, for example, multiplied in 1960s. By the end of 1965 there were thirty-one independent African states compared to only three countries in 1955 (Jackson 1987: 524-525). The significant increase in the number of sovereign territorial states provided more international support to sovereign territorial states in the Arab world. For, “massive decolonization expanded the scope of the international community of mutually recognizing states” (Strang 1991: 158-159).⁹⁷

In addition to the globalization of state-territorial sovereignty, the norm of territorial integrity also entered its highest level of the acceptance stage in 1960s and it reached the highest level of institutionalization stage in 1976 as embodied in international practices (Zacher 2001: 237). This is another major change in international society within which the Arab states were embedded.

At the same time, international society also experienced significant qualitative and quantitative change in the practices of intervention. The international society experienced major decline in the number of acts of military interventions by super powers and great powers. According to Tillemma’s data set on overt military intervention, secondary great powers (France, UK, and China) intervened only 27 times

⁹⁷ Similarly, Hendrik Spruyt explains the rise of territorial sovereign state in the European system by the mutual empowerment of international system. The rise of territorial-sovereignty states advanced “by the process of mutual empowerment. Sovereign actors only recognize particular types of actors as legitimate players in the international system. Because the Hanseatic system of rule proved to be incompatible with that of territorially defined states...it was not considered to be a legitimate players in international relations” (In Hall: 63-64).

between November 1965 and December 1985, compared to 95 military interventions between September 1945 and October 1965. While Super powers (U.S and USSR) intervened 13 times between September 1945 and October 1965, they conduct only 11 military interventions between November 1965 and December 1985 (1989: 185).

The frequency of great powers' military interventions in the Middle East significantly declined as well. According to Pearson and Baumann, military interventions by major powers in the Middle East declined from 18 times in 1950s, to 4 in the 1960s and only 3 in the 1970s (1983: 199-200).

Hedley Bull also identifies changes in both the quantity and type of interventions. "There has emerged a new climate of international legitimacy unfavorable to intervention... there has been a profound change in our moral and legal notions of the justification of intervention" (Bull 1984: 146). "As the legal and political obstacles to the older forms of intervention have become more serious, forcible intervention has tended to give place to non-forcible, direct to indirect, and open to clandestine" (183).

The Western powers have substituted non-forcible forms of interference for forcible ones, indirect intervention for direct, and clandestine or secret methods of intervention for overt or open ones... The early 1970s is one period that provide a good deal of evidence that such a change of style and method was taking place. (150-151)

The new modes of intervention, identified by Bull, reflect significant change in the norms of sovereignty because the new methods of intervention are much less effective than the former methods of intervention. "It would not be true to say that the new methods left the interveners in as dominant a position as they had been before, when the old methods could still be used effectively." Economic intervention, indirect

intervention and clandestine interventions are not as effective as the old methods of intervention (152).

Developing countries forcibly advocated for the above changes in the norms and practices of state-territorial sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention, which helped to universalize these norms (Bull 1984, Jackson 1987, Zacher 2001). Furthermore, the consolidation of the above norms took place in spite of Cold War divisions. “Despite great differences in ideology and domestic institutions, the United States, the Soviet Union, and the European states rarely supported secessionist movements either in Europe or in the Third World” (Barkin and Cronin 1994: 125).

The practices of the United Nations also embodied and reified the above changes in the norms of sovereignty. “The way that the United Nations provided a framework for decolonization, especially Africa and Asia, helped to couple sovereignty with territorial integrity, and the supposed “norm of sovereignty-as-territorial-integrity” has been reinforced continually since” (Elden 2009: 145). Michael Barnett and Martha Finnemore also find that “the UN encouraged the acceptance of *the norm of sovereignty-as-territorial Integrity* through resolutions, monitoring devices, commissions, and one famous peacekeeping episode in the Congo in the 1960s” (1993: 713). Elsewhere Barnett also asserts the role of the United Nations in globalizing sovereignty. “The principal purpose of the United Nations was to facilitate the transition from the era of empires to the era of sovereignty—to globalize and universalize sovereignty as the basis of relations between states” (Barnett 2010: 49-50). Yet Barnett still excludes the role of United Nations in his account on the consolidation of sovereignty in the Arab world.

Ignoring the role of international society in consolidating state-territorial sovereignty in the Arab World is particularly striking given the consensus in IR literature on the role of international organizations in consolidating state-territorial sovereignty in Africa. “International organizations have served as “post imperial ordering devices” for the new African states, in effect freezing them in their inherited colonial jurisdictions and blocking any post-independence movement toward self-determination” (Jackson and Rosberg 1982: 21). It is odd that there is a consensus on the role of international institutions and organizations on consolidating state-territorial sovereignty in Africa but the very same international institutions and organizations are utterly ignored in the literature on sovereignty in the Middle East.

New Norms of Sovereignty; New International Structure

The new highly-institutionalized norms of state-territorial sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention in 1960s and 1970s are the new international structure within which the Arab states were embedded. The new international structure that emerged in 1960s is very different from its predecessors that structured international system from 1922 to late 1950s.

The post 1960s international norms are the new international structure within which state-territorial sovereignty and its role of non-intervention became the hegemonic rules of the game in the Arab state system. This is the new international structure within which Egypt distanced itself from the roles and practices of national sovereignty; and this is the new international structure within which Iraq and Syria distanced themselves from the roles and practices of geographical sovereignty.

It is not just mere coincidence that “*by 1964* the rules of the game in Arab politics begun to shift toward norms of Arabism that were consistent with sovereignty,” wrote Michael Barnett, referring to state-territorial sovereignty (Barnett 1998: 122). It is not just mere coincidence that all the alternative accounts choose 1960s and/or 1970s as a turning point in the consolidation of territorial-state sovereignty and non-intervention in the Middle East.

The consolidation of state-territorial sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention in international system, I argue, contributed to the consolidation of these very same norms in the Arab state system. For, the new international norms constituted a new international structure, with distinctive constraints and opportunities. The new international norms and practices of sovereignty impose new structural constraints and opportunities that were absent in the past. The new international norms empowered some states while constrained others in the Arab state system; the new international norms legitimized some practices and delegitimized others; and the new international norms constrain and enable the type of involvement of great powers in the Middle East. The new international norms constituted what is thinkable and unthinkable, possible and impossible in international and regional politics.⁹⁸

To illustrate the importance of post 1960s international norms of sovereignty on the regional Arab state system, I will compare them with historical norms of sovereignty.

⁹⁸ The compatible/incompatible relation between regional and international norms is a significant source of power. “Norms that fit logically with other powerful norms are more likely to become persuasive and to shape behavior . . . Mutually reinforcing and logically consistent norms appear to be harder to attack and to have advantage in the normative contestations that occur in social life. In this sense, logic internal to norms themselves shapes their development and, consequently, shapes social change” (Finnemore 2003: 71).

This comparison will clearly shows that “changes in the content and understanding of sovereignty can greatly affect the ways in which states are constrained or enabled to act in their international relations” (Barkin and Cronin 1994:110).

State-Territorial Sovereignty vs. National Sovereignty

International systems that are based upon state-territorial sovereignty are very different from international system of national sovereignty. Historically, there has been tension between

state sovereignty, which stresses the link between sovereign authority and a defined territory, and national sovereignty, which emphasizes a link between sovereign authority and a defined population. The two types fundamentally differ in the source of their legitimation as independent entities, thereby altering the environment through which states relate to each other. During periods when international norms legitimize state rather than national sovereignty, the international community and its institutions will tend to defend the rights of established states against nationalist claims of domestic ethnic groups. On the other hand, when the norms of the international order favor national over state sovereignty, the international community will be more sympathetic to pleas for national self-determination, often at the expense of established states (Barkin and Cronin 1994: 108).

The status of interstate borders in international system of state-territorial sovereignty is also very different from the status of interstate borders in international system of national sovereignty:

Should the state emphasis predominate in the understanding of sovereignty over national emphasis, then international borders will be seen as territorially determined, and the international community can be expected to defend the interests of established states over nationalist aspirations. On the other hand, should the national emphasis predominate, then states will be seen as tied to specifically defined populations and territorially malleable to suit the evolution of nations. The international community will then be more sympathetic to nationalist claims, often at the expense of established states (Barkin and Cronin 1994: 113-114).

Following World War I, the international society adopted national sovereignty as its ordering principle but after World War II, and particularly after 1960, international society adopted state-territorial sovereignty as its ordering principle. The change from national sovereignty to state sovereignty as ordering principle of international system reflected the new international understandings that nationalism was the primary cause of World War II because nationalism provided justifications for German occupations of Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland, and nationalism was one of most objectionable aspects of the fascist ideology (122).

Viewing nationalism as the cause of World War II, the international society affirmed the self-determination of people but not of nations or states. From the perspective of post-World War II international society, “self-determination does not apply to independent countries, for whom territorial integrity overrides claims that individual peoples might make” (Elden 2009: 146). The change from national to state-territorial sovereignty is also embodied in practices. “It is clear in practice that territorial integrity has regularly and usually successfully been asserted as dominant [over self-determination]...because sovereignty has been taken to apply to state rather than peoples” (Elden 2009: 166).

The new international understanding of sovereignty as state-territorial sovereignty rather than national sovereignty has significantly affected the practices of drawing inter-state borders. “The intersubjective understanding of sovereignty that state borders had a legitimacy apart from national groups had a marked effect on the patterns of borders in Europe following the war.” The German nation, for example, was divided into two states. Furthermore, “instead of expanding the borders of the German state to encompass

ethnic Germans in Eastern Europe, millions of ethnic Germans were evicted en masse from Poland and Czechoslovakia so that their borders with Germany would no longer be threatened.” “Many borders in Eastern Europe, such as those between the Soviet Union and Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania, were altered in ways that were politically convenient but ethnically non-representative.” In the same vein, Korean and Vietnamese nations were also divided into two states and decolonization in Africa also did not proceed along nationalist lines (124). Thus it is obvious that the “division of the Arab nation” into territorial states was not an exception to the practices of international society that adopted state-territorial sovereignty as its ordering principles.

This is the international society within which state-territorial sovereignty became the hegemonic rules of the game in the Arab state system. This is the international society within which Egypt, Iraq, Syria and the Hashemite distanced themselves from national, geographical and dynastic sovereignty respectively. It is obvious that the post 1960s international society is much less tolerant of the practices of dynastic, national and geographical sovereignty than previous international societies.

The international society, which adopted state-territorial sovereignty, delegitimized Egypt’s practices of national sovereignty and its legitimizing principle of national self-determination. Egypt’s practices of national sovereignty, legitimized by nationalism, were perceived as a threat to international peace and stability. For, the international society defined international peace and stability in terms of state-territorial

sovereignty, which “clearly establishes the priority of the integrity of established state borders over the integrity of national or nationalist groups” (Barkin and Cronin 123).⁹⁹

The international society, whose ordering principle state-territorial sovereignty, also rejected Egypt’s legitimizing principle of national self-determination because according to the new norm of sovereignty, “self-determination does not apply to independent countries, for whom territorial integrity overrides claims that individual peoples might make” (Elden 2009: 146).

Similarly, the new norms of state-territorial sovereignty delegitimized Iraq sovereign claims over Kuwait and Syria sovereign claims over Lebanon. For, Syria and Iraq practices were a threat to territorial integrity norm. Territorial integrity norm is not a natural feature of international system; it is a new norm that entered its acceptance stage in early 1960s and reach its high level of institutionalization in mid 1970s (Zacher 2001). International society favored territorial integrity over redrawing international borders. For, “territorial integrity has long been asserted as a stabilizing factor... the status quo, for all its flaws, is preferred over the disorderliness that would likely result from wholesale redrawing of boundaries” (Elden 2009: 143).

Had the international society adopted national sovereignty instead of state-territorial sovereignty as its ordering principle, Egypt would face more enabling and less constraining international normative structure. Had international society adopted national

⁹⁹ This is very different from post World War I international society that sought international justice. For example, the Covenant of the League of Nations stipulates that “the members of the League reserve to themselves the right to take such action as they shall consider necessary for the maintenance of right and justice” (article 15, paragraph 7). This reference to right and justice as legitimate basis for state actions is in marked contrast to the emphasis on international peace and security in the Charter of the UN” (Barkin and Cronin 124).

sovereignty, the interstate borders in the Arab state system would be very different. Had international society not adopted state-territorial sovereignty, Iraq and Syria receive less opposition from international society.

The international norms of state-territorial sovereignty protected the weak Arab states from powerful neighbors. They protected Kuwait from Iraq; they also protected Lebanon from Syria; they protected Syria and Saudi Arabia from the Hasehmite dynasty, and they also protected the Arab monarchies from Nasser. The failed state of Lebanon would not survive without the international norm of state-territorial sovereignty;¹⁰⁰ the small state of Kuwait would not survive without the protection provided by international norm of state-territorial sovereignty. The international norms of state-territorial sovereignty also provided authority, legitimacy and justification to the United Nations and great powers to intervene in the Middle East to protect the weak Arab states from their stronger neighbors as the British intervention in Kuwait in 1961.

In other words, the international norms of state-territorial sovereignty imposed structural obstacles against the practices of national sovereignty, dynastic sovereignty and geographical sovereignty in the Arab state system. The international norm of state-territorial sovereignty not only delegitimized the mere acts of intervention but they also made impossible the social purposes behind the acts of intervention. By making impossible the social purposes associated with national, dynastic and geographical sovereignty, the international norms also diminished the utility of the acts of intervention that sought to achieve these social purposes. In other words, international society

¹⁰⁰ Similarly, Jackson and Rosberg (1982) also explain the survival of weak African states by the international norms of sovereignty.

delegitimizes both the practices of intervention and the purposes of the acts of intervention.

The above discussion aimed to denaturalize and historicize the international norms of state-territorial sovereignty to show their distinctive effects on the consolidation of state-territorial sovereignty and its associated roles of intervention and non-intervention in the Arab state system. This task cannot be done if we adopt the mainstream IR account of sovereignty that impose a timeless, fixed meaning of sovereignty instead of exploring the historical practices of sovereignty. The above counter factual analysis makes explicit the impact of international norms on political order in the regional Arab state system.¹⁰¹ Let's turn to the third explanatory variable, inter-state borders in the Arab state system.

Sovereignty's Complementary Institution: Inter-State Border in the Arab State System

During this period, we also notice more institutionalization of inter-state borders in the Arab state system, comparing to the previous two periods discussed in Chapters Five and Six.

The higher-level institutionalization of inter-state borders also contributed to the decline in the practices of intervention. For, high level of institutionalization of inter-state border reduces mutual vulnerability, insecurity, uncertainty, and fear between neighboring states as well as intervention driven by fear and uncertainty. It also clarifies the distinction between territorial jurisdictions of supreme authority between neighboring

¹⁰¹ Jackson and Rosberg (1982) also utilize counter-factual analysis to explain the impact of international norms of sovereignty on the survival of weak African states.

states. Equally important, inter-state borders helped the ruling Arab regimes to consolidate territorial identity, on the expense of transnational and other non-territorial identities, which also reduced the political and security interdependence between the Arab states.

Prominent scholars have acknowledged the change in the level of institutionalization of inter-state borders in the Arab state system. Fouad Ajami wrote in 1978 that

the boundaries of Arab states have been around now for nearly six decades. It is not their existence which is novel, but their power and legitimacy—the power (as much as that power exists in the modern state system) to keep pan-Arab claims at bay and effectively to claim the loyalty of those within. They are no longer as “illusory and permeable” as they used to be. (1978: 365)

Discussing the decades between 1977 and 1987, Ghassan Salame also observes the higher level of institutionalization of inter-state borders. He notices what he calls the “amazing and widespread stability” in the Arab states system (1987: 345). “The various Arab regimes are first protected by the triumph of geography. No sweeping trends such as the Nasserite one are emerging. Borders have become much less permeable to ideas originating in other Arab countries” (1987: 345).

Even Saddam Hussein, President of Iraq and one of the most radical Arab leaders acknowledges the new power of inter-state borders. In a revealing speech in 1982 he claims:

Arab unity can only take place after a clear demarcation of borders between all countries . . . Arab unity must not take place through the elimination of the local and national characteristics of any Arab country . . . The question of linking unity to the removal of boundaries is no longer acceptable to present Arab mentality. It could have been acceptable 10 or 20 years ago. We have to take into consideration the change which the Arab mind and psyche have undergone. We must see the world as it is. Any Arab would have wished to see the Arab nation as

one state . . . But these are sheer dreams. The Arab reality is that the Arabs are now 22 states, and we have to behave accordingly. Therefore unity must not be imposed, but must be achieved through common fraternal opinion. Unity must give strength to its partners, not cancel their national identity. (quoted in Drysdale and Blake 1985: 257)

Conclusion

The practices of intervention declined in the Arab state system because of transformation in the norms of sovereignty in the Arab state system and international system. The consolidation of state-territorial sovereignty and its associated role of non-intervention in both Arab state system and international system constituted the decline in the practices of intervention in the Arab state system.

In addition, for the first time since its formation, the structure of the Arab state system is composed of shared inter-subjective norms of sovereignty instead of conflicting norms of sovereignty. This change in the normative structure reduced the level of fear and uncertainty in the system, as well as interventions driven by fear and uncertainty. Finally, the inter-state border became more institutionalized during this period, compared to the previous ones, which also contributed to the decline in the practices of intervention.

Yet this is not the end of history. The revival of the acts of intervention in the Arab state system since the beginning of the Arab Spring in 2011 shows that the Arab state system is entering a new era in which the principle of state-territorial sovereignty and its associated role of non-intervention are seriously contested. This change in state-territorial sovereignty and non-intervention in the Arab state system is constituted by transformation in the norms of sovereignty in the international system as well as changes in territoriality (inter-state borders).

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION: THE ARAB SPRING, SOVEREIGNTY AND
INTERVENTION

Sovereignty and Intervention in the Arab State System

Since the eruption of the popular uprisings in the Arab world in 2011, the Arab state system has been experiencing a resurrection in the practices of external intervention. We also notice change in the type of intervention. For the first time in their history, individual Arab states and the Arab League conduct external interventions in domestic affairs of Arab states justified by humanitarian causes.

In response to its mass atrocities against Libyan citizens, the Arab League suspended Qaddafi's Libya from the regional organization in February 22, 2011. A few months later, in August 2011, the Arab League turned over the Libya's seat to the National Transitional Council (NTC), effectively recognizing the rebel body as the legitimate authority in Libya.

In a special meeting in Cairo on March 12, 2011, the Arab League also called upon the United Nation Security Council to impose a no fly zone over Libya. The Arab League resolution proclaims that Gadhafi's government had "lost its sovereignty" and asked the "United Nations to shoulder its responsibility—to impose a no-fly zone over

the movement of Libyan military planes and to create safe zones in the places vulnerable to airstrikes”(Huffington Post website).¹⁰² All 22 Arab states supported the decision except Syria and Algeria.

The Arab League also strongly supported the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973 on March 17, 2011 authorizing “all necessary measures” “to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in the Libyan Arab Jumahiriya.” The resolution also imposed a no-fly zone over Libya “to protect civilians” (UN Website).¹⁰³ Several Arab states including Jordan, UAE, and Qatar took part of NATO military operations in Libya authorized by UNSC 1973 resolution. Even the Arab public opinion welcomed the international intervention in Libya despite the memory of the “coalition of the willing” invasion in Iraq in 2003, which was partly legitimated on humanitarian grounds.

The Arab League has adopted similar policies towards Syria. Following Bashar Assad regime’s massive human rights violations, the Arab League expelled Assad’s Syria from the regional organization on November 12, 2011. In the same resolution, the Arab League asked all its members to withdraw their ambassadors from Damascus. The Arab League also imposed political and economic sanctions against the Syrian regime. Only Yemen and Lebanon opposed the resolution while Iraq abstained.

The Arab League even asked the United Nations Security Council to send a peacekeeping mission into Syria. In a resolution issued on February 12, 2012, the League

¹⁰² Access http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/03/12/arab-league-asks-un-for-libya-no-fly-zone_n_834975.html.

¹⁰³ For the formal document of the resolution see [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1973\(2011\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1973(2011))

"ask the UN Security Council to issue a decision on the formation of a joint UN-Arab peacekeeping force to oversee the implementation of a ceasefire" (BBC).¹⁰⁴ The resolution also urged the League members to "halt all forms of diplomatic cooperation" with the Syrian government. The resolution also states that the league supported "opening channels of communication with the Syrian opposition and providing all forms of political and financial support to it" (New York Times).¹⁰⁵

In November 2012, both the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council recognize the Syrian opposition as the legitimate representative of the Syrian people. "The states of the council announce recognizing the National Coalition for the Forces of the Syrian Revolution and Opposition... as the legitimate representative of the brotherly Syrian people," GCC chief Abdullatif al-Zayani said in a statement (Alarabiya).¹⁰⁶ And on March 2013, the Arab League granted the Arab League seat to the Syrian opposition coalition.¹⁰⁷ In addition, individual Arab states, including Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Jordan, have provided military support to the Syrian opposition.

The above practices of intervention, legitimated on humanitarian grounds, are unprecedented in the Arab state system. For the first time, the Arab League intervenes in internal affairs of member state in response to massive human rights violations against its citizens. For the first time, the Arab League suspends member states for domestic human

¹⁰⁴ Access <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-17004530>

¹⁰⁵ Access http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/13/world/middleeast/arab-league-requests-un-peacekeepers-for-syria.html?_r=0

¹⁰⁶ Access <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/11/12/249215.html>

¹⁰⁷ Access <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/27/world/middleeast/syrian-opposition-group-takes-seat-at-arab-league.html>

rights violations. For the first time, the Arab League recognizes opposition groups as legitimate sovereign instead of the ruling regimes. For the first time, the Arab League called for international intervention in internal affairs of an Arab state.

In the past, the Arab state system never experience intervention justified by humanitarian causes. In 1982 the Assad regime conducted a massacre in the city of Hama, killing dozens of thousands of people, but the reaction of the Arab states was nothing comparing to the current response. The regime of Saddam Hussein also conducted massive atrocities against Kurds and Shia in Iraq but the Arab reaction was also passive. In reaction to Black September in 1970s, when the Jordanian regime killed thousands of Palestinians, the Arab states reaction was actually based on respect to state-territorial sovereignty.

The current revival in the practices of intervention and their justification by humanitarian causes embody significant change in the inter-subjective understandings of sovereignty in the Arab state system. Accordingly, state-territorial sovereignty is still the dominant institution of sovereignty in the Arab state system. But absolute non-intervention is no longer the hegemonic rule of the game in the Arab state system. According to the new understanding of sovereignty, the state loses it right of non-intervention if it conducts massive human rights violations against its citizens.

Contingent sovereignty, rather than absolute sovereignty, is the new emerging norm of sovereignty in the Arab state system. The state loses its right of absolute non-intervention only if it conducts massive human rights violations. The conditions of external intervention are restricted only to extreme cases of massive human rights violations as the cases of Syria and Libya illustrated.

This change in sovereignty partly explains the differences in the Arab League strong reactions to Libya and Syria on the one hand and its relatively mild reaction to Egypt, Bahrain and Tunisia on the other. This difference in intervention is partly explained by the severity of human rights violations. According to the new understanding of sovereignty, the Arab League intervenes only in cases with severe human rights violations as in the cases of Libya and Syria. But Egypt, Tunisia and Bahrain experienced much less human rights violations than Syria and Libya.

While there have been changes in the practices of intervention, the principle of territorial integrity is still strong in the Arab state system. There is a strong consensus between Arab states on the legitimacy of territorial integrity. Despite the rise of sectarianism in Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria and calls for redrawing the borders of the region based on sectarian lines, the Arab League still strongly support the territorial integrity norm. Since the eruption of the Arab Spring, the Arab League and the Arab states have repeatedly emphasized their strong respect to territorial integrity of all Arab states. All the Arab League initiatives to solve the civil wars in Iraq, Syria and Libya were based in the principle of territorial integrity.

It is important to emphasize that above regional changes in sovereignty are still in their emerging stage and has yet to reach high level of institutionalization. Regional and international forces are competing, through practices, on redefining the norms of sovereignty in the Arab state system. It is ongoing process and still too early to impose a definite conclusion on the new norms of sovereignty in the Arab state system. But it is safe to assert the end of absolute non-intervention in the Arab state system.

Sovereignty and Intervention in International System

The revival of the practices of intervention in the Arab state system takes place within a new international normative structure. The regional changes in sovereignty and intervention are not independent from but rather constituted by the international changes in sovereignty and intervention.

The international norms of sovereignty have been redefined since the end of the Cold War. Former U.N. secretary general Kofi Annan asserts in 1999, “State sovereignty, in its most basic sense, is being redefined—not least by the forces of globalization and international co-operation. States are now widely understood to be instruments at the service of their people, and not vice versa” (Economist). In the same year the secretary general spoke of “the overriding right of people in distress to receive help... we will not, and we cannot, accept a situation where people are brutalized behind national boundaries” (Dobus 2012: 22).

According to the new international understanding, sovereignty is no longer absolute. “Sovereignty no longer exclusively protects States from foreign interference; it is a charge of responsibility where States are accountable for the welfare of their people”(UN Website).¹⁰⁸ Instead of absolute sovereignty, the United Nations endorsed the principle of “sovereignty as responsibility” (Deng 1993, 1995; Deng et al 1996) and “Responsibility to Protect.” The change in the norms of sovereignty is also embodied in the practices of humanitarian intervention (Wheeler 2003).

¹⁰⁸ For more information on R2P see <http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/responsibility.shtml>

The United Nations endorsed the Responsibility to Protect in 2005 UN World Summit¹⁰⁹ (paragraphs 138-140 of the Outcome Document).¹¹⁰ The three pillars of R2P are the following:

- 1) The State carries the primary responsibility for protecting populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing, and their incitement;
- 2) The international community has a responsibility to encourage and assist States in fulfilling this responsibility;
- 3) The international community has a responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other means to protect populations from these crimes. If a State is manifestly failing to protect its populations, the international community must be prepared to take collective action to protect populations, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations” (UN Website).

The international intervention in Libya was in fact an implementation of the principle of “Responsibility to Protect” as clearly mentioned in UNSC resolution 1973. While international military intervention, justified by R2P, did not take place in Syria, the new norms of sovereignty constituted significant international political and economic interventions against Assad regime for its failure to protect the Syrian citizens from mass atrocities (Dunne 2013).

The Arab Spring clearly shows that international norms of sovereignty affect not only inter-state relations but also state-society relations. The international norms of sovereignty did not justify any act of external support to help popular uprisings for human rights and democracy between 1950s and 1980s. Conversely, the current norms of

¹⁰⁹ Although they raise serious reservations and concerns about R2P, all Arab states endorsed R2P in the 2005 World Summit (Helal 2012: 215).

¹¹⁰ For more information on R2P see <http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/pdf/World%20Summit%20Outcome%20Document.pdf#page=30>

sovereignty provide significant support to domestic campaigns for democracy and human rights (Barnett 2010; Clark 2009; Mayall 2000).

In 19th century, European Concert of Great powers justified military interventions into domestic affairs of European states to repress liberalism and restore monarchy. The acts of military intervention to repress liberalism and protect monarchies, which were common in the first half of 19th century, are unthinkable today (Finnemore 2003: 108-124).

It is not merely a coincidence that the popular uprisings for democracy in the Arab countries took place within a particular international system that place an important value on “popular sovereignty” and “sovereignty as responsibility” rather than absolute sovereignty. It is not merely a coincidence that the Arab popular uprisings did not take place in international system dominated by absolute sovereignty such as the international system in 1950s and 1960s. The ongoing reactions of international community to the mass atrocities in Syria is not ideal but it is much more aggressive comparing to the international passive response to the mass atrocities that were conducted by the same Al-Assad regime in the city of Hama in 1982.

The importance of international norms to domestic struggles against supreme authority is also evidenced in great power responses. The United States and England intervened militarily in Lebanon, Kuwait and Jordan to support the ruling elites and monarchies there in 1950s and 1960s. But the U.S. and England could not do the same to protect their current ruling allies such as Mubarak in Egypt or Ben Ali in Tunisia. The difference in international reactions now and then to internal resistance to supreme authority is largely explained here by changes in the dominant norms of sovereignty in

international system rather than changes in polarity and distribution of power in international system.¹¹¹ International norms of sovereignty constrain not only small states but also great powers and superpowers.

Sovereignty's Complementary Institution: Inter-State Borders in the Arab State System

The inter-state borders in the Arab state system are no longer as effective in controlling diffusion of ideas across borders as in the past. "Gone are the days when Arab regimes monopolized access to information and determined what their public saw in television and read in the print" (Brynen, Moore, Salloukh and Zahar 2012: 233). Globalization (new communication technologies) lowered the effectiveness of inter-state borders. As a result it increased the interdependence among Arab states. This strategic interdependence and vulnerability, caused by communication technologies, constituted at least some of the causes of the current acts of intervention in the Arab state system.

Conclusion

This research argues that changes in the regional and international norms of sovereignty as well as changes in level of institutionalization of borders constituted the significant variation in the practices of intervention in the Arab state system from the fall of the Ottoman Empire to the present.

¹¹¹ In the same vein, the type of sovereignty in the international system also influences the international reactions to military coups. International society's norms of sovereignty did not perceive military coups as illegitimate political act in 1950s and 1960s. There were no international political or economic sanctions against states that experience military coups in 1950s and 1960s. Conversely, the current international norms of sovereignty perceive military coups as illegitimate and ought to be punished by economic and political sanctions. The current illegitimacy of military coups is sanctioned in regional and international organizations including United Nations (UN), Organization of African Union (OAU) and Organization of American States (OAS).

Sovereign-territorial states are often assumed and taken for granted in the International Relations and Middle East area studies. Instead, this dissertation problematizes both the sovereignty and territoriality of the Arab state. Both comparative politics and international relations accounts of the Middle East would benefit significantly if they allow sovereignty and territoriality to be variable instead of fixed and static concepts. Studying the relations between sovereignty, territoriality and intervention are important not only for understanding the Arab Spring but also for better understanding of the impact of globalization on the state in the international system.

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