

Mahdi, Ahmed Samir

Article

Neomercantilist War: The US military and Middle East oil (1980-2003)

Review of Economics and Political Science (REPS)

Provided in Cooperation with:

Cairo University, Cairo

Suggested Citation: Mahdi, Ahmed Samir (2022) : Neomercantilist War: The US military and Middle East oil (1980-2003), Review of Economics and Political Science (REPS), ISSN 2631-3561, Emerald, Bingley, Vol. 7, Iss. 4, pp. 302-316,
<https://doi.org/10.1108/REPS-07-2021-0076>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/316067>

Standard-Nutzungsbedingungen:

Die Dokumente auf EconStor dürfen zu eigenen wissenschaftlichen Zwecken und zum Privatgebrauch gespeichert und kopiert werden.

Sie dürfen die Dokumente nicht für öffentliche oder kommerzielle Zwecke vervielfältigen, öffentlich ausstellen, öffentlich zugänglich machen, vertreiben oder anderweitig nutzen.

Sofern die Verfasser die Dokumente unter Open-Content-Lizenzen (insbesondere CC-Lizenzen) zur Verfügung gestellt haben sollten, gelten abweichend von diesen Nutzungsbedingungen die in der dort genannten Lizenz gewährten Nutzungsrechte.

Terms of use:

Documents in EconStor may be saved and copied for your personal and scholarly purposes.

You are not to copy documents for public or commercial purposes, to exhibit the documents publicly, to make them publicly available on the internet, or to distribute or otherwise use the documents in public.

If the documents have been made available under an Open Content Licence (especially Creative Commons Licences), you may exercise further usage rights as specified in the indicated licence.



<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Neomercantilist War: the US military and Middle East oil (1980–2003)

Ahmed Samir Mahdi

Political Science Department,

*Faculty of Business Administration, Economics and Political Science,
The British University in Egypt, Cairo, Egypt*

Abstract

Purpose – This paper aims to argue that the Global Political Economy (GPE) theory of neomercantilism provides a sound explanation to the American military involvement in the Persian Gulf. Accordingly, this paper also proposes the concept of “Neomercantilist War” which analyses the use of military force to protect a strategically vital economic resource (such as Gulf oil). Neomercantilist War is a point of similarity between the GPE school of neomercantilism and the International Relations (IR) school of realism.

Design/methodology/approach – The 1991 Gulf War and the American invasion of Iraq in 2003 are two major events of American military involvement to protect and/or seize Gulf oil. These two events will be tested for neomercantilism, in addition to the concept of “Neomercantilist War” as presented in the paper. The first feature, or definitional component, of neomercantilism is the major role of the state, the second is the preponderance of security/geopolitical goals over economic goals and the third is the zero-sum, relative gains mentality to dealing between states IR.

Findings – The GPE school of neomercantilism and the concept of Neomercantilist War do offer a sound explanation of American military involvement in the Gulf.

Originality/value – The American military involvement in the Gulf region has been analysed using the IR schools of realism and liberalism, but never using GPE theory. Even though GPE is mostly concerned with economic activity, the scope of GPE should be expanded to include military policies if they affect economic resources and activity.

Keywords Neomercantilism, Neomercantilist War, Zero-sum, Military, Gulf oil, Carter Doctrine

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

The USA, since the end of World War II, has been involved in the Arab Gulf region to protect its oil resources, which are vital for the American global economic and strategic preponderance. Over the decades, several major challenges stood in the face of the American interests in the Middle East. In 1979, for example, the pro-American Shah of Iran was toppled and replaced by an anti-American regime which took over Iran’s oil resources and had a foothold on the strategic Strait of Hormuz. In December of the same year, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, thus becoming too close to the Arab Gulf states and its rich oil resources. This led to the introduction of the Carter Doctrine in January 1980, which pledged to protect the Gulf region from any anti-American challenge.

The first major practical test for the Carter Doctrine came with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. With the invasion, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein seized Kuwait’s



rich oil reserves, in addition to Iraq's own vast reserves, and potentially threatened the Saudi oil reserves as well. In 1991, the USA successfully led a military coalition to drive Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait. The Carter Doctrine was successfully applied in this American military operation. Furthermore, in 2003 the USA invaded Iraq, in order to preserve America's unipolar preponderance. The American seizure of the Iraqi oil reserves was meant to be a step in ensuring the American strategic and economic preponderance over its great power rivals (Russia, China and, arguably, the European Union). This invasion was not just a major application of the Carter Doctrine, but it was also seen as an expansion of the Carter Doctrine, from the American defence of Gulf oil to outright American invasion of a major oil-producing state. However, the invasion was mismanaged, and led to the weakening of the American position instead of strengthening it.

These two major applications of the Carter Doctrine were analysed using the mainstream International Relations (IR) theories of realism and liberalism. But there is a dearth in their analysis using Global Political Economy (GPE) theories. GPE theory is mainly concerned with international economic and financial transactions. However, the scope of GPE should be expanded to also be concerned with the international use of military force, since military activities do have an effect on commercial and economic activities. This should especially apply to the GPE school of neomercantilism, since neomercantilism is the GPE equivalent of the IR school of realism, and realism is mainly concerned with military power and military tools in international transactions between states. This paper aims to expand the scope, or the range, of GPE analysis to include the analysis of military conflicts, through introducing the concept of Neomercantilist War.

This paper attempts to analyse the American military activity in the Gulf using the neomercantilist theory of GPE. As a subfield of IR, GPE is concerned with commercial and financial relations among nations (Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2014, p. 12). In this context, oil has a special status, being a commodity of vital strategic importance and being vital to American hegemonic status. Therefore, it is natural that the USA would use military power to protect oil in an unstable region such as the Middle East. This intersection of military and economic factors is compatible with both of realism and neomercantilism. On the one hand, it is compatible with the IR school of realism, which focuses on the importance of power, especially military power. On the other hand, it is also compatible with the GPE school of neomercantilism, which is concerned with economic affairs, as well as (like realism) power relations and zero-sum competition between states. Neomercantilism is considered the GPE counterpart of realism, since both schools focus on power relations and zero-sum competition. This paper is concerned with three main features, or three main definitional components, of neomercantilism.^[1] These three features are, first, the main role of the state, second, the priority of geopolitical and security concerns over economic concerns and, third, the zero-sum dealings between states.

This paper offers a number of proposals. First, this paper argues that these two wars in the Gulf (in 1991 and 2003) reflect an American application of neomercantilist policies:

- H1.* The American military involvement in the Gulf, to protect and/or seize the Arab oil resources, reflects a neomercantilist foreign policy.

This American neomercantilist policy is illustrated on two levels; the security level, and the economic level. These two levels are evident because, in all of the cases above, the USA had two aims. The first was to secure its strategic position against its rivals. The second was to secure its economic position in the Gulf oil, where oil, as a strategic commodity, was an end in itself, and a means for other, greater geopolitical ends, as will be explained below.

This intersection of geopolitical preponderance and economic resources would reflect the common characteristics of realism and neomercantilism. Both schools see the state as the main actor. Both see that security and strategic goals have priority over economic goals (even

as neomercantilism pays more attention than realism to economic factors), and both see the zero-sum nature of relations between states. These common features between realism and neomercantilism would also be seen in the way in which both schools see the use of military power, especially in the case of American military protection/seizure of Gulf oil. Based on these common points between realism and neomercantilism, and based on the fact that military power has a role in both schools, I propose the concept of Neomercantilist War, which I define as follows:

Neomercantilist War is an interstate military conflict, or the deployment of military forces, or the threat to use military force, all in the context of a zero-sum competition to protect and/or seize an economic resource, where this economic resource is vital for the national security and/or geopolitical supremacy of the states involved. Thus, this economic resource is an economic end in itself, and a means for other, greater geopolitical ends.

The definition above includes all three aforementioned definitional components of neomercantilism, in addition to their application to a military conflict. War, despite being a significant feature of IR, is not usually focused upon in GPE theory. This paper offers a view on how neomercantilism, as a GPE theory, might see war. Neomercantilist War can be seen as a point of similarity between realism and neomercantilism, since its focus on military power and national security, in addition to the subordination of economic resources for the sake of national security, satisfies the features of both schools. Therefore, this paper argues that the American military deployment in the Gulf, to protect the vital oil resources, reflects an American application of both realist and neomercantilist policies, and of Neomercantilist War:

H2. Both of the realist school of IR and the neomercantilist school of GPE see the use of military power through the concept of Neomercantilist War, which reflects the common features between realism and neomercantilism.

It should be noted, though, that this paper is not concerned with any particular strand of realism. This paper only focuses on realism's use of military power and submission of economic factors to military/security factors, a common feature in all realist strands in general. In any case, the concept of Neomercantilist War contributes to the literature on the relation between the IR schools and the GPE schools, since it is reflecting elements of both realism and neomercantilism, thus presenting itself as a point of similarity between both schools.

To test for these hypotheses, this paper will analyse the two cases mentioned above; the 1991 Gulf War and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Each of these two cases will be tested for neomercantilism, and will be tested for the definition of Neomercantilist War. Case studies such as the Saudi oil price policy (Mahdi, 2020a) and the American sanctions on Libya (Mahdi, 2020b) were tested previously, by testing for the three assumptions of neomercantilism: the main role of the state, the priority of geopolitical goals over economic goals, and the zero-sum nature of interstate interaction. The same approach will be followed here, with modifications. First, the main role of the state will not be tested for, since, in the two Gulf wars, the American state has clearly used what Thomson calls its "meta-political authority" to decide what is "political" and requires state intervention (Thomson, 1995, p. 214). Washington saw that Gulf oil was too important to be left to the market, and that military action was necessary to protect Gulf oil and, by extension, American global preponderance. Furthermore, the zero-sum nature of American supremacy under the realist/neomercantilist approach will also be taken for granted, and will therefore not be tested. What will be tested for in both cases, though, is the prioritisation of American geopolitical interests over the mere economic nature of Gulf oil, and the importance of Gulf oil for American global supremacy. Therefore, both cases of US intervention in the Gulf (1991 and 2003) will be tested for neomercantilism and Neomercantilist War based on the following research questions:

- RQ1. To what extent was the protection and/or seizure of Gulf oil vital for US global geopolitical supremacy in both case studies?
- RQ2. To what extent do both cases satisfy the assumptions of the theory of neomercantilism?
- RQ3. To what extent do both cases satisfy the assumptions of “Neomercantilist War” given above?

The next section will give a presentation of the theory of neomercantilism, followed by a section which presents the literature on US military involvement in the Middle East, then a presentation of both cases and their reflections of neomercantilism and Neomercantilist War.

2. Theoretical framework: the neomercantilist theory of GPE

Neomercantilism is a GPE theory which is widely seen as the equivalent of the realist school in IR theory. Like realism, neomercantilism believes in the preponderance of the state as the main actor on the international political and economic arena. It also believes, like realism, that political and security goals have priority over economic goals. Finally, neomercantilism, like realism, believes in the zero-sum, relative gains nature of relations between states. A main difference between realism and neomercantilism, however, is that mercantilism pays much more attention to economic power, economic tools and economic goals than realism does. Furthermore, according to [Drezner \(2010\)](#), most realists (perhaps with Robert Gilpin as “an obvious and important exception”) believe that “international economic exchange has no impact upon the international political system.” Moreover, most realists fail to incorporate domestic politics into their analysis, while neomercantilism pays more attention to domestic factors such as business corporations or other domestic actors ([Cohn, 2016](#), pp. 5, 12, 51–56; [Drezner, 2010](#); [Gilpin, 1975](#), pp. 37–60; [Hettne, 1993](#), pp. 237–238; [Kirshner, 1999](#), p. 89; [Mahdi, 2020a](#), passim, [Mahdi, 2020b](#), passim).

Neomercantilism, as a modern-day GPE theory, is different from the classic form of mercantilism. Mercantilism, in its classic form, was a policy, or theory, which was practiced by the great powers of Europe in the period between circa 1500 and circa 1750. During this period, the great powers of Europe believed that the real source of a state’s power was in the amount of bullion (gold and silver) which it accumulated, and that this bullion was necessary to help the state to build armies and navies to fight against their neighbouring great power competitors. To accumulate bullion, states believed in the necessity of maintaining a positive balance of trade at the expense of their other trading partner states, and in establishing trade barriers to protect their domestic industries and reduce imports.

Neomercantilism differs from its classic counterpart. The first major difference is in terms of time, as neomercantilism arose after two historic events. The first event was the Industrial Revolution, and the second event was the publication of Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* in 1776, in which he criticised the mercantile acts of the European great powers and called for more liberal trade policies. Neomercantilism actually adopted some of Smith’s ideas about free trade, and incorporated them into its policies. Despite practicing free trade, however, neomercantilism still believed in the zero-sum nature of international political and economic dealings, and in the main role of the state. The second major difference between modern-day neomercantilism and classic mercantilism is that, instead of seeing a nation’s power in accumulating bullion (like classic mercantilism), neomercantilism sees a nation’s power in other economic factors. These factors include seeking a balance-of-payments surplus, the imposition of import and/or export controls, the expansion of world market shares, preponderance in advanced technologies and other forms of economic power ([Gilpin, 1975](#), pp. 45–46; [Kirshner, 1999](#), pp. 70–72; [Mahdi 2020a, b](#)).

Based on the neomercantilist theory, this paper will discuss two main events of US military intervention in the Middle East to protect and/or seize its oil resources; the 1991 Gulf

War and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Both events will be tested for neomercantilism, based on the research questions aforementioned. The answer to these research questions is expected to show that realism and neomercantilism would have very similar analysis of the American military involvement to protect Gulf oil. It would shed light on the neomercantilist school's analysis on the uses of military power to protect economic resources, or Neomercantilist War, to protect the American strategic interests.

The next section presents the literature on the literature on neomercantilism and military force, and on the American military involvement in the Gulf.

3. Literature review

3.1 Military power in neomercantilist thought

The link between military power and classic mercantilism has been discussed in previous academic work. [Conti \(2017\)](#), for example, presents his idea of “mercantilist warfare” to test whether a military conflict, during the period between 1500 and 1750, was based on mercantilist beliefs and policies or not. However, Conti does not base his work on the general main assumptions of mercantilism (such as the accumulation of bullion and the positive balance of trade). Instead, his criteria are based on the “military assets” used in the conduct of warfare, and their cost effectiveness, such as the convertibility of ships from commercial use to military use ([Conti, 2017](#), pp. 59–74).

Similarly, O'Brien presents what he calls “three centuries of mercantilist warfare” which started around 1500 and ended in 1815, with the end of the Napoleonic Wars ([O'Brien, 1987](#), p. 80, and [O'Brien, 2004](#), p. 2). Strangely enough, however, he does not actually provide a definition for “mercantilist warfare”, nor does he identify the “mercantilist” aspect during this period which did not exist before 1500 or after 1815.

[Rommelse \(2011\)](#) does not use the word “mercantilist warfare”, but he makes a link between mercantilism and warfare. He argues that committed mercantilist policymakers in Europe of the 1600s believed that naval military power, and the ability to apply it over long distances, was an “essential tool for economic policymaking”, since “fleets could be used to protect trade and shipping, expand colonial presence – if necessary at the expense of other states – and inflict harm on competing economies” ([Rommelse, 2011](#), p. 142).

Military power was not only linked to classic mercantilism, but to modern mercantilism, or neomercantilism, as well. According to [Gerace \(2004\)](#), for example, there are several functions of military power that may have an impact on commerce and economic activities. First, there is the “protective” function of the military, where military power is used to “protect trade, shipping, trade routes, and access through waterways”, and to “protect commercial and infrastructural assets from attack and interruption.” He mentions protecting “oil through the Persian Gulf” as an example. A second function of the military which affects commerce is the “regulative” function which is “the ability of major states to control [international] commercial movement over land and sea”, a classic example of which was Great Britain in the 19th century. The third function of the military which affect commerce, according to Gerace, is “the punitive function” which is “the ability of a major state to use force against another to enforce compliance and retaliate against aggression. In terms of commerce, this could involve retaliation against threats to commerce and shipping and other acts of economic warfare.” He mentions pushing Iraq out of Kuwait in 1991 as an example. The final function, according to Gerace, is “coercive and intrusive military actions” which are used to “force an adversary to accept one's terms.” He cites the example of “the American Asiatic Squadron before the Second World War [which] enforced American commercial rights in China and elsewhere in Asia.” ([Gerace, 2004](#), pp. 83–87).

Based on these uses of military power which affect global commerce and strategic assets, Gerace argues that there is a “traditional connection” between militarism (which he defines as

“aggressive military behaviour of states”) and mercantilism (which he defines as simply “predatory economic behaviour” which implies a zero-sum mentality). However, Gerace uses the word “mercantilism” in his work, even though it is clear from his analysis of the events of the past two centuries that he actually means present-day neomercantilism, instead of mercantilism in its classic sense. Gerace focuses on mercantilism, or neomercantilism, because he thinks that it has a major role in global economic interactions today, and that “mercantilist behaviour is evident in numerous ways, even when a state has a preference for free trade.” This is especially true, he argues, when connecting military activity to commercial and economic interactions between states, because the “mercantilist features of state behaviour” are seen in “the manifold ways in which military power and commerce are connected.” Furthermore, Gerace acknowledged the two-sides-of-the-same-coin relationship between the IR school of realism and the GPE school of neomercantilism, because realism, according to Gerace, “is logically and historically associated with mercantilism.” This association would extend to both schools’ vision of the military functions in commercial and economic purposes (Gerace, 2004, pp. 18–19, 98).

Similarly, Leverett (2008) introduces the idea of “resource mercantilism”, which he defines as “the use of economic and foreign policy instruments by national governments to help their state-owned national energy companies (NECs) secure access to overseas hydrocarbon resources on more privileged bases than simple contracts based on market prices” (Leverett, 2008, p. 211). Additionally, he argues that resource militarisation, which is the increasing need for the use of military to secure distant energy resources and investments, includes resource mercantilism, since NECs’ investments may need the military protection of their governments (Klare, 2008a, p. 41 and Leverett, 2008, p. 213). [2]

There is ample literature on neomercantilism as applied by great powers like Russia and China, especially in how they deal with energy resources (See, for example, Lind and Press, 2018, passim and Ziegler, 2010, passim). However, there is a shortage in the literature which tackles the modern use of military power from a neomercantilist point of view. This paper seeks to fill this literature gap through proposing the concept of Neomercantilist War. The concept of Neomercantilist War, through its merging of realist and neomercantilist features, provides further insight into the common points between the IR school (as represented here by realism) and the GPE school (as represented here by neomercantilism).

The American military involvement in the Gulf to protect and/or seize Gulf oil is used as a case study, and the linking of military force to neomercantilist thought, through the concept of Neomercantilist War, would be achieved by two steps. The first step is presenting two main cases of US military involvement in the Persian Gulf, the 1991 Gulf War and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The second step would be testing both cases for neomercantilism, and for Neomercantilist War.

The next section reviews the IR literature on US military involvement in the Gulf.

3.2 *The American military in the Gulf: IR perspectives*

Much has been written about the American military involvement in the Middle East using IR theory. However, there is almost no literature on the American military involvement in the Middle East using GPE theory.

Bromley (1991) argues that the American economic, non-territorial empire in the post-World War II era is based on controlling the global oil order (Bromley, 1991, pp. 48, 53, 106, 123 and 245). American global power is supported by the fact that the American military presence close to Gulf oil resources and global oil routes (like the Strait of Hormuz, the Suez Canal and the Strait of Malacca). Another source of power for the USA is the fact that oil, as an international strategic commodity, is traded mainly in US dollar, which increases the global demand for the American currency and further strengthens the American global position

(See, for example, [Mahdi, 2012](#), pp. 6–9, 18–19 and *passim*). [Karlsson \(1986\)](#), for example, wrote that “the American-controlled world economic order was, to a large extent, built on the control of oil,” as Washington’s control over the international oil market was:

intimately interconnected with the control of the world economic order, which was established after the Second World War. Oil is and has been the most important single commodity in the present world order. It became the very vehicle on which the unprecedented economic expansion of the postwar world has been riding. Thus, the control of the international oil market was one of the most important keys to the control of the world order ([Karlsson, 1986](#), p. 279).

This control over the international oil order required an American foothold in the region containing the largest oil reserves in the world, namely, the Persian Gulf. In adherence to the Carter Doctrine, the American military is securing the Gulf region, even though the USA today it is not as dependent on Gulf oil as it used to be in the past decades (due to the widespread use of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, to extract oil and natural gas in the USA) ([Energy Information Administration \(2020\)](#)).

While Washington’s reliance on Middle East oil is declining, we see, on the other hand, that Washington’s strategic rival, China, has been increasing its dependence on Gulf oil over the past two decades. In effect, argues [Bachuretz \(2013\)](#), it would seem that the USA is “continuing to expend massive amounts of its defence budget on ensuring the continued flow of oil to China!” To Bachuretz, this can seem like “a puzzle to realist approaches to energy security.” To solve this mystery, it is necessary to take two steps. First, it is necessary to broaden the American definition of energy security, to include not just the oil supplies to the USA, but also the oil supplies to the rest of the world (including great power rivals like China). This redefinition is necessary, given that the oil-consuming countries of today’s world have “shared vulnerabilities of a tightly integrated global oil market.” Second, this broadening of the American definition of energy security (to include cooperation with rivals such as China) results in a “liberal tweaking of the traditional realist approaches to energy security that has defined US engagement in the Gulf under the Carter Doctrine”. Bachuretz does acknowledge, however, that realism would still be “holding the most explanatory power.” ([Bachuretz 2013](#), pp. 2–4, 7, 22, 36–37, 41, 44–50).

[Prifti \(2017\)](#) uses an offensive realist approach to analyse the American power projection in the Persian Gulf region. American foreign policy towards the Middle East in the last seven decades has been characterised by continuity, where the main objective has been maintaining America’s regional hegemonic status in the Middle East, and preventing the emergence of another regional hegemon. The Carter Doctrine in 1980 aimed to prevent the Soviet challenge to American regional hegemony, and to maintain the flow of oil from the Gulf. The American invasion of Iraq in 2003, according to Prifti, aimed at preventing Iraq’s potential threat to America’s regional hegemony. Similarly, argues Prifti, the Obama Doctrine has used an offensive realist strategy to prevent the rise of regional powers such as Iran, Russia, China and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) ([Prifti, 2017](#), pp. 20, 22, 23, 85, 95–109 and 113–147).

[Ikenberry \(2006\)](#) took a liberal approach to the American invasion of Iraq. He said that the Bush Doctrine of 2002, based on unilateralism and preventive strikes, wanted to invade Iraq to help fight terrorism and maintain America’s national security and its unipolar global standing. The post-World War II international system was based on a “bargain” between the USA and the rest of the world, where the USA would provide security and commit itself to the international system, in return for international support and acceptance of American leadership. However, the mismanagement of the invasion of Iraq showed the dangers of unilateralism and neo-imperial adventurism. It also led to America’s imperial overstretch and to the weakening of America’s global standing, and to a deterioration of the aforementioned “bargains” between the USA and the rest of the world ([Ikenberry, 2006](#), pp. 197–244).

The above literature tackles US military presence in the Gulf from an IR perspective. None of it, however, uses the GPE perspectives. This paper fills this gap by analysing the US military presence in the Gulf (to protect and/or seize its oil resources) from a neomercantilist perspective. Neomercantilism is the GPE counterpart of the IR school of realism, and both schools see the use of military force to protect economic resources through the same realist lens. This is one of the similarities between neomercantilism and its IR counterpart, realism.

The next section is a historical presentation of both cases of American military deployment in the Gulf, followed by an application of the theory of neomercantilism to these military deployments. It also provides an examination of the compatibility of these two cases with the concept of Neomercantilist War.

4. Historical background

Three main events (one policy statement and two wars) display the importance of US military power in protecting and/or seizing the Gulf oil resources. The Carter Doctrine of 1980, a watershed policy statement which shaped US military intervention in the Gulf, was applied in two major Gulf wars: The 1991 Gulf War, and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The two cases chosen here (1991 and 2003) are unique, because they involved the use of force (war) to protect and/or seize oil (a strategic economic commodity) in the Gulf to preserve American global supremacy on the economic and security level. These cases therefore do not just display the intersection of security and GPE, but also the intersection between the IR theory of realism and the GPE theory of neomercantilism. By analysing the significance of oil to US national security and global preponderance during the 1991 and 2003 Gulf wars, this paper argues that both wars display the features of neomercantilism and Neomercantilist War. Before we discuss both cases, we first need to discuss the Carter Doctrine; the policy statement which laid the field for both Neomercantilist Wars in the Gulf.

4.1 The 1980 Carter Doctrine: laying the field for Neomercantilist War

In early 1979, the Islamic Revolution overthrew Mohamed Reza Pahlavi, the pro-American Shah of oil-rich Iran, and replaced him with an anti-American, radical regime. In December 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan and came geographically much closer to the oil-rich Gulf region. In January 1980, in response to these two events, US President Jimmy Carter issued the Carter Doctrine, in which he said:

The region which is now threatened by Soviet troops in Afghanistan is of great strategic importance: It contains more than two-thirds of the world's exportable oil. The Soviet effort to dominate Afghanistan has brought Soviet military forces to within 300 miles of the Indian Ocean and close to the Straits of Hormuz, a waterway through which most of the world's oil must flow. The Soviet Union is now attempting to consolidate a strategic position that poses a grave threat to the free movement of Middle East oil . . . Let our position be absolutely clear: an attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force. (Carter, 1980)

The Carter Doctrine is clearly a neomercantilist document. Washington used its meta-political authority to declare that the security of Gulf oil cannot be left to the market, and that the American army had to get involved to prevent any anti-American force from having a presence in the Gulf or threaten the Gulf oil. It stresses Gulf oil as a main economic resource necessary for American national security and global preponderance amid the wider zero-sum competition of the Cold War). The Carter Doctrine, as a policy, emphasised that any military conflict in (or near) the Gulf region would be (at least partially) over oil as an economic source in itself, and as a means for American regional and global preponderance. Furthermore, the fact that these developments satisfied the three definitional components of neomercantilism is a reflection that the Carter Doctrine was paving the way for Neomercantilist War.

The first large-scale practical application of the Carter Doctrine came in 1991 with Operation Desert Storm to drive the Iraqi invasion out of Kuwait.

4.2 Case 1: The 1991 Gulf War

In the summer of 1990, disagreements took place between Iraq and Kuwait over interstate borders, joint oilfields, Kuwait's oil policies and Kuwait's refusal to forgive Iraq's debts. These disagreements led to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990. With the invasion, Saddam Hussein became in control of both of Iraq's and Kuwait's oil reserves, both totalling to about 25% of the world's oil reserves at the time. Potentially, if the Iraqi army expanded to invade Saudi Arabia's oilfields as well, which also totalled to about 25% of the world's oil reserves at the time, then Saddam Hussein would control a total of 50% of the world's oil reserves. In response, the USA built a military coalition of about 28 allied states to drive Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait, and in January 1991, the American-led attack against the Iraqi forces in Kuwait started. It was codenamed Operation Desert Storm.

The 1991 Gulf War was a practical application of the Carter Doctrine, as the USA launched the war to protect the Gulf oil from falling under the influence of Saddam Hussein. The Americans justified the war by the desire to protect the USA, and its allies, from Saddam Hussein's control of a large portion of the global oil reserves. President George H. W. Bush emphasised the importance of the oil factor in this crisis. For example, he said in a speech on August 15, 1990, that "our jobs, our way of life, our own freedom and the freedom of friendly countries around the world would all suffer if control of the world's greatest oil reserves fell in the hands of Saddam Hussein." Similarly, Secretary of Defence Dick Cheney said in September 1990 that Saddam Hussein, if left, could be "in a position to be able to dictate the future of worldwide energy policy" and that this would give him a "stranglehold" on the American economy (Klare, 2002, p. 34; Klare, 2004, pp. 5, 50; Klare, 2008b, pp. 180–181; Rutledge, 2005, p. 52; Yergin, 1991, p. 773).

However, there were other reasons which were even more important than the oil factor, namely, the new American unipolar standing following the defeat of the Soviet Union, or the so-called New World Order. Bush hinted that this New World Order was more important than the oil factor, when said in his January 1991 State of the Union address: "What is at stake is more than one small country; it is a big idea: a new world order, where diverse nations are drawn together in common cause to achieve the universal aspirations of mankind – peace and security, freedom, and the rule of law." (Bush, 1991).

Similarly, experts like former National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski (2008, p. 69), CIA analysts Fuller and Lesser (1997, p. 43), McCormick (1995, p. 248), and others acknowledged that the economic goal of protecting Gulf oil was indeed vital in the American decision to launch the 1991 Gulf War. Nevertheless, they argued, what was more important than oil was the strategic/hegemonic goal of preserving the new American global unipolar standing and punishing anyone who would challenge the new American hegemony.

Statements like these, by President Bush and by experts and specialists, showed that the security and geopolitical considerations were more important than the immediate goal of protecting Gulf oil, and that the American government had to take the military initiative to preserve its energy security and its global preponderance. In addition, the zero-sum mentality was obvious in denying Saddam Hussein control over Kuwait's territory (and, by extension, its oil resources). The need to use military force protect Gulf oil, where oil was an economic resource and a means for American global supremacy amid the last days of the Cold War, show an element of neomercantilism in the American use of military force to protect the Gulf oil resources. Therefore, it could be argued that the use of military force in the 1991 Gulf War followed the neomercantilist theory in GPE. The realist and neomercantilist schools again intersected in Neomercantilist War in the 1991 Gulf War.

However, Saddam Hussein remained an anti-American force in the region, even after driving him out of Kuwait. Presidents George H. W. Bush and William J. Clinton applied a policy of containment against him. But President George W. Bush adopted a different policy, aiming for a total invasion of Iraq in 2003.

4.3 Case 2: *The American invasion of Iraq in 2003*

Following the September 11, 2001 attacks and the American invasion of Afghanistan, President George W. Bush issued his foreign policy doctrine; the Bush Doctrine. The Bush Doctrine was reflected in a series of speeches and official documents, including Bush's State of the Union Address in January 2002, his Graduation Speech to West Point in June 2002, and his National Security Strategy of September 2002 (Bush, 2002a, b, c). The Bush Doctrine basically consisted of the following points; the USA was in a war against terror which emanated mainly from the Islamic world, and the best way to fight this terrorist threat was to impose democracy on the Muslim states, using military action of necessary. The War on Terror would also require the USA to use preventive military attacks, using unilateral action if necessary, without waiting for its enemies to attack first, and without waiting for the approval of its allies or the approval of international institutions (Kaplan and Kristol, 2003, pp. 73–73, 112).

Following the American invasion of Kabul in December 2001, the Bush Administration and its neoconservative members started to push for the invasion of Iraq, arguing that Iraq was an eminent threat. A main justification which the administration gave for the invasion was that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction which he intended to use against American interests. Another justification for the invasion of Iraq was that Saddam Hussein had ties to Al Qaeda, thus implying that Saddam Hussein was involved in the September 11 attacks. As it turned out, all of these claims were based on falsified evidence and poor intelligence (Clarke, 2004; Draper, 2008; Halper and Clarke, 2004; Kean, 2004; Pelletière, 2004; and others).

In fact, the real economic and geopolitical reasons for the invasion of Iraq revolved around Iraq's oil riches. It could be argued that Iraq's oil was, as Mahdi argued, "an end in itself, and a means for other, greater ends" (Mahdi, 2012, pp. 111–128 and passim). On the one hand, Iraq's oil was an end in itself, given that the American oil companies were supportive of the invasion and had plans for investments in Iraq's oil resources (Palast, 2005).

On the other hand, Iraq's oil resources were the "means" for other, greater, more strategic and more global "ends." The Bush Administration, and its neoconservative advisers, aimed to overthrow Saddam and turn Iraq into a democratic, pro-American state on the Gulf. This would scare all of the Arab and Muslim states into obeying Washington's orders, and would set Iraq as a model for all Arab and Muslim countries to follow, according to neoconservative figures like Charles Krauthammer and Richard Perle (Krauthammer, 2003, p. 27 and Halper and Clarke, 2004, pp. 156, 308–309). It would also help Washington establish Iraq as its main ally in the region, instead of Saudi Arabia. This was because Washington was starting to lose trust in Riyadh, especially that there were reports of Saudi sponsorship of terrorism. The invasion of Iraq would also help protect and strengthen Israel in the region (Kaplan and Kristol, 2003, p. 99–100; Kristol, 2002a, b). Moreover, a strong American military presence in the Gulf region would enable it to face possible challenges from Russia and China in Central Asia and the Caspian region, which, in the long-run, would allow the USA to establish global power preponderance. In addition, control of Iraq's oil would help the USA have more influence over global oil reserves, and over the global oil supplies going to America's competitors in the Far East and in Europe, which would also contribute to American global power (Brzezinski, 2005, pp. 63, 71–72; Morrissey, 2009; Rutledge, 2005, p. x and Yordán, 2006, pp. 148–150). Therefore, reshaping Iraq on the American mould, and scaring all other

Arab and Muslim states to follow this pro-American mould, would strengthen America's geopolitical standing in the region and in the world. Such were the goals, or the "ends", of the American invasion of Iraq.

It was planned that Iraq's oil should have been the "means" to achieve all of these "ends." Reshaping Iraq's oil sector should have been the means by which Washington would achieve its goal of reshaping Iraq and the region. According to the testimony of Deputy Secretary of Defence Paul Wolfowitz before the US Congress in March 2003, America's plans for Iraq and the region would not cost much for the American treasury, as these plans would have been financed by Iraq's own oil resources. Therefore, the American project in Iraq would pay for itself (Mahdi, 2012, p. 136). Thus, Bush's plans for reshaping Iraq and the Middle East (and, by extension, embolden the American global geopolitical standing) depended on Iraq's oil resources and oil revenues to finance this grand American geopolitical project. Needless to say, however, the plan ultimately failed due to the severe mismanagement of the Bush Administration and its neoconservative elite.

Does the American military invasion of Iraq in 2003 satisfy the definitional components of neomercantilism? Again, regarding the relative importance of strategic versus economic goals, it is clear from the analysis of the Bush Doctrine that it had a long-term, comprehensive global plan for America's geopolitical standing vis-à-vis other great powers, which goes beyond just controlling Middle East oil. Even if controlling Iraq's oil was a goal for the invasion, then it was clear that Iraq's oil was, more importantly, a means for other greater ends which had regional and global repercussions on America's power vis-à-vis its regional and global competitors. Therefore, the military operation of 2003 did satisfy the neomercantilist conditions, and the American invasion of Iraq was another application of Neomercantilist War. However, the mismanagement of the invasion led to a decline in America's global standing and in America's power in the Middle East.

The next section will illustrate how the elements of neomercantilism and Neomercantilist War were evident in each of the two cases of American military intervention in the Gulf.

5. An assessment of neomercantilism and Neomercantilist War

After presenting the two cases of American military intervention in the Gulf and how these events displayed the features of neomercantilism and Neomercantilist War, I will present the main findings in each of the two military events.

First, the priority of security concerns over economic concerns, as a main feature of neomercantilism was clear. In none of the cases did economic considerations have priority over security considerations. In the Carter Doctrine, which paved the way for Neomercantilist War, a reader of the State of the Union Address of January 1980 would see that the protection of Gulf oil, no matter how important, was only one factor within the wider context of the Cold War. In the 1991 Gulf War, President Bush said that what was at stake was more than just Kuwait and its oil; it was the New World Order and America's new unipolar standing. In the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the seizure of Iraq's oil was only a stepping stone towards a grandiose reshaping of the region to enhance America's regional and global power (even though the plan failed due to the mismanagement of the invasion). In both wars, control over Gulf oil was an end in itself as an economic commodity, and a means for other greater geostrategic ends in the zero-sum great power competition.

Second, the three main components of neomercantilist theory (the state as the main actor using its meta-political powers to decide whether an issue is political or not, the priority of security over economic goals and the zero-sum competition) were satisfied in both cases.

Furthermore, the conditions of Neomercantilist War were also satisfied. As mentioned above, I propose a definition for Neomercantilist War (a definition which includes all three components of neomercantilism) as:

An interstate military conflict, or the deployment of military forces, or the threat to use military force, all in the context of a zero-sum competition to protect and/or seize an economic resource, where this economic resource is vital for the national security and/or geopolitical standing of the states involved. Thus, this economic resource is an economic end in itself, and a means for other, greater geopolitical ends.

Both military deployment cases to protect this vital resource fall under the category of Neomercantilist War. This is because, in both cases, Gulf oil was a strategically important economic resource, vital for American national security and global preponderance, and because the three definitional components of neomercantilism were satisfied in both cases.

Furthermore, if we apply Gerace's classification of the uses of military power, then the 1991 Gulf War would fall under the punitive use of military force because it involved enforcing compliance on an adversary. The 2003 invasion of Iraq, on the other hand, would fall under the "coercive" use of military force, because it was meant to force the Iraqi people, government and oil sector to surrender to the American remodelling of Iraq.

6. Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to explore the analytical capabilities of neomercantilism, and to test its maximum boundaries by delving beyond mere economic interactions, and into military conflict over economic resources, which has classically been the realm of IR theory not GPE theory. Neomercantilism, as a GPE theory, is concerned with the political economy of the great power competition and global order. This paper argues that the scope of neomercantilism should be extended beyond the mere economic interactions of states and great powers, into analysing the military interactions between states and great powers, and wars for global supremacy and preponderance.

US hegemony requires (among other things) control over Gulf oil, not necessarily for American consumption, but for ensuring American influence over such a global, strategic commodity and thus ensuring American global supremacy (see [Bromley, 1991](#); [Karlsson, 1986](#)). During the 1991 Gulf War, the protection of the Gulf's oil was an end in itself, to protect it from Saddam's control. It was also a means for other greater ends, since control over Middle East oil is a basic factor in US global supremacy in the New World Order. The same would apply for the 2003 invasion of Iraq; Whether George W. Bush and the neoconservatives of his administration said it or not, Gulf oil, as a strategic commodity, was an end for American policymakers, and a means for a greater end: American preponderance on the Middle Eastern and global level. Evidently, control over Gulf oil was an all-present factor in both wars.

Aspects of a Neomercantilist War were thus evident in this competition over power in the Gulf, especially that the concept of "Neomercantilist War" goes beyond the war over the economic resource, and delves into the role of this economic resource in the national security and/or global supremacy of the belligerents. In both Gulf wars, Washington was in a zero-sum, great power competition for global supremacy, and one evident goal was control over the flow of Middle East oil for American global geopolitical and economic supremacy.

Neomercantilism (and GPE schools in general) pays more attention to economic issues than the IR school of realism. And this paper, with the concept of Neomercantilist War, attempts to contribute to the understanding of how neomercantilism views the use of military power, even though military power has traditionally been the within the field of the IR theory of realism, not the GPE theory of neomercantilism. Therefore, this paper is an attempt to further understand the points of similarity between the IR school of realism, and its GPE counterpart of neomercantilism.

The American military presence in the Gulf displays common features between realism on one side, and neomercantilism on the other side. This may support the idea that the use of military power to protect a state's geopolitical and economic security is indeed an additional

common feature between both of the realist and neomercantilist schools. This hypothesis contributes in further clarifying the relation between realism and neomercantilism, and it opens the door to further academic work about the relation between the IR school of realism and the GPE school of neomercantilism. It may also open the door for further academic work on the points of similarity and points of difference between the field of IR and the field of GPE.

Notes

1. The term “definitional component” is borrowed from Thomson (1995). It was also used in Mahdi (2020a).
2. For a discussion and critique of Leverett (2008), see Mahdi (2020a).

References

- Bachuretz, M. (2013), *Rethinking Energy Security: The Carter Doctrine in a Changing Energy Landscape*, MA, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary, available at: www.etd.ceu.hu/bachuretz_madeleine.
- Bromley, S. (1991), *American Hegemony and World Oil*, Pennsylvania State University Press, Pennsylvania.
- Brzezinski, Z. (2005), *The Choice: Global Domination or Global Leadership*, Basic Books, New York.
- Brzezinski, Z. (2008), *Second Chance: Three Presidents and the Crisis of American Superpower*, Basic Books, New York.
- Bush, G.H.W. (1991), “Address before a joint session of the congress on the state of the union”, *The American Presidency Project, University of California, Santa Barbara*, available at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=19253> (accessed 29 January 1991).
- Bush, G.W. (2002a), “President delivers state of the union address”, *White House*, January 29, available at: <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html>.
- Bush, G.W. (2002b), “President Bush delivers graduation speech at West Point, United States Military Academy, West Point, New York”, *White House*, June 1, available at: <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020601-3.html>.
- Bush, G.W. (2002c), “The national security strategy of the United States of America”, *White House*, September, available at: <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2002/>.
- Carter, J. (1980), “Jimmy carter state of the union address 1980 January 23, 1980”, *The Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum*, available at: <https://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/assets/documents/speeches/su80jec.phtml>.
- Clarke, R. (2004), *Against All Enemies: Inside America’s War on Terror*, Free Press, New York.
- Cohn, T. (2016), *Global Political Economy: Theory and Practice*, 7th ed., Routledge, London.
- Conti, T.V. (2017), “‘Mercantilist warfare’ in Virgilio Ilari and Giuseppe Della Torre”, in *Economic Warfare: Storia Dell’arma Economica*, Società Italiana di Storia Militare, Rome, pp. 59-74.
- Draper, R. (2008), *Dead Certain: The Presidency of George W. Bush*, Free Press, New York.
- Drezner, D. (2010), “Mercantilist and realist perspectives on the global political economy”, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*, available at: <http://internationalstudies.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.001.0001/acrefore-9780190846626-e-260>.
- Energy Information Administration (2020), “U.S. Imports from Persian Gulf countries of crude oil”, available at: <https://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/hist/LeafHandler.ashx?n=pet&s=mcrimusp2&f=a> (accessed 30 June 2020).
- Fuller, G.E. and Lesser, I.O. (1997), “Persian Gulf myths”, *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 1997.
- Gerace, M. (2004), *Military Power, Conflict and Trade: Military Spending, International Commerce and Great Power Rivalry*, Routledge, Oxon.

-
- Gilpin, R. (1975), "Three models of the future", *International Organization*, Vol. 29 No. 1, pp. 37-60.
- Goldstein, J. and Pevehouse, J. (2014), *International Relations*, 10th ed., Pearson, New York.
- Halper, S. and Clarke, J. (2004), *America Alone: The Neo-Conservatives and the Global Order*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Hettne, B. (1993), "The concept of neomercantilism", in Magnusson, L. (Ed.), *Mercantilist Economics*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, New York, pp. 237-238, doi: [10.1007/978-94-011-1408-0_10](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-011-1408-0_10).
- Ikenberry, G.J. (2006), *Liberal Order and Imperial Ambition*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Kaplan, L. and Kristol, W. (2003), *The War over Iraq: Saddam's Tyranny and America's Mission*, Encounter Books, California.
- Karlsson, S. (1986), *Oil and the World Order: American Foreign Oil Policy*, Berg Publishers Limited, Warwickshire.
- Kean, T. (2004), *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States*, Norton, New York.
- Kirshner, J. (1999), "The political economy of realism", in *Ethan Kapstein and Michael Mastanduno Unipolar Politics: Realism and State Strategies after the Cold War*, Columbia University Press, New York.
- Klare, M. (2002), *Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict*, Owl Books, New York.
- Klare, M. (2004), *Blood and Oil: How America's Thirst for Petrol Is Killing Us*, Hamish Hamilton, London.
- Klare, M. (2008a), "Petroleum anxiety and the militarization of energy security", in Daniel, M. and Russell, J. (Eds), *Energy Security and Global Politics: The Militarization of Resource Management*, Routledge, Oxford, pp. 41-61.
- Klare, M. (2008b), *Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet: How Scarce Energy Is Creating a New World Order*, Oneworld, Oxford.
- Krauthammer, C. (2003), "Coming ashore", *Time*, Vol. 17, p. 27, February.
- Kristol, W. (2002a), "A new approach to the Middle East", *The Weekly Standard*, May 22, available at: <http://www.weeklystandard.com/content/public/articles/000/000/001/273awdje.asp>.
- Kristol, W. (2002b), "Memorandum to: opinion leaders", *Project for the New American Century*, April 25, available at: <http://www.newamericancentury.org/saudi-042502.htm>.
- Leverett, F. (2008), "Resource mercantilism and the militarization of resource management: rising Asia and the future of American primacy in the Persian Gulf", in Daniel, M. and Russell, J. (Eds), *Energy Security and Global Politics: The Militarization of Resource Management*, Routledge, Oxford, pp. 211-242.
- Lind, J. and Press, D. (2018), "Markets or mercantilism? How China secures its energy supplies", *International Security*, Vol. 42 No. 4, pp. 170-204.
- Mahdi, A. (2012), *Energy and US Foreign Policy: The Quest for Resource Security after the Cold War*, I.B. Tauris, London.
- Mahdi, A. (2020a), "Saudi neomercantilism in the oil price war", *Review of Economics and Political Science*, Vol. 5 No. 1, pp. 2-20, available at: <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/REPS-10-2019-0134/full/pdf?title=saudi-neomercantilism-in-the-oil-price-war>.
- Mahdi, A. (2020b), "Domestic and external neomercantilism in the American sanctions on Qaddafi's Libya", *L'Egypte Contemporaine*, No. 539, pp. 33-102, July 2020.
- McCormick, T. (1995), *America's Half-Century: United States Foreign Policy in the Cold War and after*, 2nd ed., John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.
- Morrissey, J. (2009), "The Geoeconomic pivot of the global war on terror: US central command and the war in Iraq", in Ryan, D. and Kiely, P. (Eds), *America and Iraq: Policy-Making, Intervention and Regional Politics*, Routledge, Oxon, pp. 103-122.
- O'Brien, P. (1987), "Intercontinental trade and the development of the third world since the industrial revolution", *Journal of World History*, Vol. 8 No. 1, pp. 75-133.

- O'Brien, P. (2004), "Colonies in a Globalizing economy", *Paper presented at the Second GEHN Conference*, Irvine, California, 15-17 January 2004, available at: <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/22484/1/wp08.pdf>.
- Palast, G. (2005), "Secret US plans for Iraq's oil", *BBC*, March 17, available at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/newsnight/4354269.stm>.
- Pelletière, S. (2004), *America's Oil Wars*, Praeger, Connecticut.
- Prifti, B. (2017), *US Foreign Policy in the Middle East: The Case for Continuity*, Palgrave Macmillan/Springer, Cham, doi: [10.1007/978-3-319-45327-9](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-45327-9).
- Rommelse, G. (2011), "An early modern naval revolution? The relationship between 'economic reason of state' and maritime warfare", *Journal for Maritime Research*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 138-150.
- Rutledge, I. (2005), *Addicted to Oil: America's Relentless Drive for Energy Security*, IB Tauris, London.
- Thomson, J. (1995), "State sovereignty in international relations: bridging the gap between theory and Empirical research", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 39 No. 2, pp. 213-233.
- Wolfowitz, P. (2003), "Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz interview with Sam Tannenhause, Vanity Fair", *U.S. Department of Defence*, May 9, available at: <http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2594>.
- Yergin, D. (1991), *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money and Power*, Free Press, New York.
- Yordán, C. (2006), "America's quest for global hegemony: offensive realism, the Bush doctrine, and the 2003 Iraq war", *Journal of Social and Political Theory*, Vol. 110, pp. 148-150.
- Ziegler, C. (2010), "Neomercantilism and energy Interdependence: Russian strategies in East Asia", *Asian Security*, Vol. 6 No. 1, pp. 74-93.

Corresponding author

Ahmed Samir Mahdi can be contacted at: asamirmahdi@yahoo.com