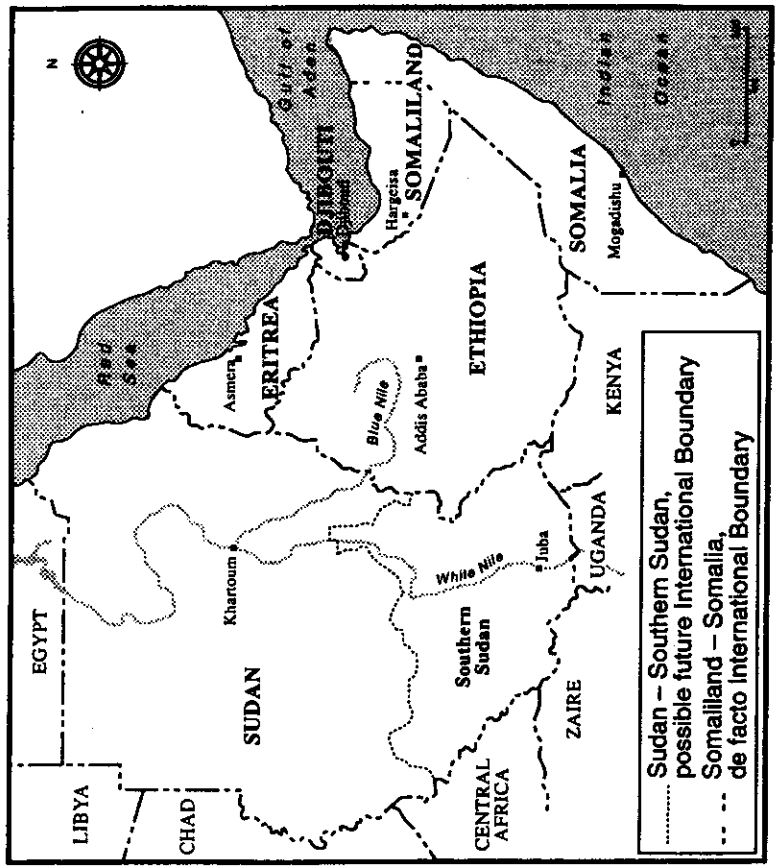

Map 8: The Horn of Africa, 1995

5 Demography, Migration and Security in the Middle East

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INTRODUCTION: POPULATION, SOVEREIGNTY, SECURITY

One of the most curious aspects of the study of politics among nations is the near total disregard for the phenomenon of international migration. The movement of people across international boundaries continues to be ignored by even the most perceptive analysts of international relations. Today the policy agenda of many states is being set – and constrained – by the mobility of people and especially of labor. Interstate relations are increasingly influenced by variables that had seldom entered security calculations in any explicit way. And to revert to an earlier sociological literature, even the national 'character' of many states is being influenced by people entering their borders in large numbers. People on the move is not a subjective, perceptual, or cognitive phenomenon: it is empirical, objective, factual, and very real. In theory, sovereign states determine who can enter and who can become a citizen. Few states in the Middle East represent the proverbial sovereign; states vary in their capacity to control access, to design migration policies, or to implement their will. Control over national borders is honored more in the breach. But the very effort itself places the state at the center of the migration process.[1]

The reality is that different types of international population movements in the Middle East have differing implications for power and politics, sovereignty, and the state. Migration for employment (legal and non-legal), displacements due to conflict, and migration for permanent settlement all generate different resonances and responses by the state and may well engender different economic consequences for the home country and for the recipient state. Economic factors are easier to understand, explain, and even predict than are the political correlates of migration, either as causes or consequences.

This chapter views the mobility of population across national boundaries as a political phenomenon, with states influencing migration across national borders and seeking to regulate the flows and their consequences – on both the sending and the receiving sides. The population factor is a salient feature of international politics, and population movements are driven as much by political events and political conditions as by economics. While in some cases

economic determinants of international migration are undoubtedly important and in others political factors dominate, in all cases the role of regulation, government intervention, and politics is significant in shaping both sides of the mobility process.

The Missing Pieces

In principle, theories of international relations (IR) and of international political economy (IPE) should be theoretically sensitive to the phenomenon of international population movements. In practice this is seldom the case. Both IR and IPE scholarship generally ignore the political, security, or power consequences of population movements for both sending and receiving communities and states. Analysts of international political economy have also had little to say about the ways in which the movement of people affects economics or politics.

The Middle East is a region where the very fabric of political contentions, conflict, and violence is shaped by population factors and by the movement of people. It is also a region where economic conditions both shape and are shaped by population factors. Central to both the politics and the economics – hence to the security of states – is the movement of populations across national boundaries.

This missing piece is prevalent also in studies focusing on the Middle East. It is missing in a different sense than is the case in the broader field, namely that population issues are seldom connected to security issues, nor are security issues connected to the fundamentals of economy. The challenge in this regard is to connect 'high' politics to 'low' politics.

'High' Politics and 'Low' Politics

Mobility of people across borders – for whatever reason – by definition shifts the population–resources–technology balance, as the skills of people influence prevailing levels of technology and as size and other demographic factors affect patterns of resource utilization.

But the influence goes both ways as well: prevailing patterns of public policy, government expenditures, and other actions of the regime can directly or indirectly influence population dispositions and expectations, resource exploitation, and investments in technology (knowledge and skills).

What the state does, in the last analysis, may well be a major determinant not only of population movements but of the consequences once the initial streams of mobility have taken place. And, what the state does is shaped by

prevailing conceptions of its security and the stability of the regime and of the social order.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: STATES AND CONFLICTS

National Profiles

Today the Middle East is a veritable laboratory of states – in terms of differences in population characteristics, resource endowments, and technological capabilities as well as forms of governance, types of social and political order, and levels of economic development. This laboratory cannot be reduced to differences in wealth, or population, or size alone: the variations reflect a 'mix' of national profiles.

In its most basic context the state is defined by jurisdictional claims over territorial space and is bounded by internationally sanctioned borders. At any point the state can be characterized in terms of basic structural parameters: its population features, the resource base, and the prevailing levels of technology, skills, and organizational capabilities.[2] These factors help shape the sense of national priorities and the view of what can or cannot be done at any point in time. These three variables – population, resources, technology – are highly interactive and must be thought of as complex arrays of interrelated features.

Form of governance and the role of politics both influence and are influenced by these basic factors. For example, strategies for industrialization involve technological change (and impacts), resource exploitation, and so on. Educational policy influences technological capabilities. The 'master variables' are thus 'dependent' as well as 'independent' variables.

Historical Legacy

The post-war settlements following the First World War explicitly addressed the demographic implications of new boundaries. The mandate system revised the map of the Ottoman empire in the Middle East. Mobility became increasingly controlled as the metropolitan powers sought to redirect flows of trade and commercial relations toward Europe. Egypt, one of the few sovereign states during this period, effectively sought to use migration of its skilled manpower as an instrument of its new foreign policy – to counter the influence of the colonial powers but also to sustain a posture of leadership in the Arab community. The evolving demographics of the Middle East, taking

shape at the end of the Second World War, set in place, with few notable exceptions, the political map of today.

The immediate post-war period witnessed twin developments in the region – economic growth and institutional expansion – which enhanced the role of the state in shaping the development process. At first glance it seemed that demographic factors were obscured by other political and economic elements shaping state policy. Moreover, in the Gulf states displaced Palestinians were salient. Their presence raised seemingly interconnected issues, such as the presence of refugees and their importance for labor markets and state structures, the emigration of non-nationals for employment, and the potential transformation of temporary migrants to permanent status. With the exception of Egypt, economic growth almost everywhere depended on non-national labor, and in some cases even the structure of the state was based on the presence and performance of foreigners.

It was not so much the scale as the scope of this migration that was important; in the Gulf, Libya, North Africa, and Sudan, it was that the functions of the state had to be undertaken by non-nationals. In other words, all key institutions generating the services performed by the state were staffed by non-citizens. This meant that the structures which defined sovereignty were themselves run by foreigners. Nonetheless, with some important exceptions, manpower issues and international migration were conventionally relegated to the status of the region's 'low politics'.

The 1973 Dislocations

All this changed with the oil price increases of 1973, placing manpower issues at the forefront of the political and economic agenda of all states. While the sheer magnitude of international migration to the oil-rich states was seen largely in economic terms, the reality pointed to fundamental and pervasive political features of this migration. Because the scale of this migration and its scope became particularly salient, manpower at all skill levels became the single most fundamental constraint on investment and on development. Not only did the state and its institutional basis rely on non-nationals, but the economy and economic activity were in some cases wholly dependent on non-citizens. These realities necessitated an active role for the state in regulation and control. Even factors that were understood in narrow economic terms, such as the remittances of workers abroad, became inherently political as governments sought to control the flows and as the families back home began to increase their dependence on income earned abroad.

Population movements have affected the nature of economic exchanges in the region in profound and unexpected ways. Aside from obvious impacts

– movements of labor and flows of remittances – there are a host of underlying, or submerged, effects. Together we have labeled these as the 'hidden economy'.[3] And, in the Middle East the scale and scope of this economy is so extensive as to significantly overshadow indicators of the formal economy in many labor-exporting countries.

The 'hidden economy' has taken shape because of changes in the political landscape. It persists in spite of efforts by the political system to regulate these exchanges and discipline these interactions. The conflict between the hidden economy and the formal economy (and its sustaining polity) is one of the most significant and novel features of the region's political economy.

The empirical facts shaping these changes and institutional transformations are the import and export of labor. Labor as a tradable commodity gradually became a major dimension of interstate interactions. Trade in people assumed as robust a set of characteristics as did trade and exchange in commodities. And when the state is unable to 'capture' the benefits of trade in people, the stage is set for political contention and possibly conflict between senders and receivers and between governments and the agents and institutions involved in facilitating migration across borders.

Thus, as alluded to earlier, given the salience of population, both the system and the process of migration now place population movements in the realm of 'high politics'. This means that the legitimate, routine, 'normal' actions of individuals – namely, search for employment – become activities of an intensely political nature.

Migration Mosaics of the 1970s to 1990s

The 1970s and 1980s were decades of remarkable population movements in the Middle East, with large-scale migration for employment across national borders. And the early years of the 1990s witnessed new refugeeism, in conjunction with added patterns of return migration. Overall, the scale and scope of these mobilities were unprecedented in the region, leading observers and analysts alike to highlight the uniqueness of this phenomenon and the salience of the underlying economic conditions driving this migration.

Despite the salience of migration in the politics of the region, it is ironic that the most detailed analyses of the adjustments during these decades focused on economic factors, and were based on the presumption that economic explanations are sufficient for understanding both causes and consequences of such movements of population. Seldom can economic considerations alone suffice to explain causes or consequences of the vast network of population movements or the types, forms, and modes of mobility. Politics was crucial, as was the role of the state as well as regional and global

power considerations and the attendant consequences, conflicts, and adjustments. Indeed, the presence of the state is a fact of life everywhere in the region. State influence takes different forms, with different manifestations, particularly in shaping the structure of economic activity.

In many ways, the issue of migration in the Middle East gradually transformed itself from one of 'low' politics to one of 'high' politics. And by definition, 'high' politics involves security, stability, and survival. If 'high' politics is the tip of the iceberg, then migration shaped the 'low' politics that gradually interjected itself, and became 'high' politics in the region. We turn first to the tip of the iceberg (the 'high' politics and the dimensions of security) before exploring its structure at the core (the fundamentals of demography and the imperatives of mobility).

HIGH POLITICS: DIMENSIONS OF SECURITY AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROCESS

Clarifying the linkages between demography and security requires systematic delineation of the dimensions of security (since the empirical links vary across dimensions), the threats to security rooted in migration patterns, and the overt violence–mobility connections. Such is the task of this section.

Dimensions of Security

Security for nations is conventionally defined in terms of territorial integrity and sanctity of national borders. It is the conventional, one-dimensional military definition. In these terms security is enhanced to the extent that a country's military capabilities enable protection of its territory. This definition is unduly restrictive. Since the overall security of states extends beyond the military dimension, while essential and necessary, security at the borders is not a sufficient condition for overall national security.

An extension of the notion of security, proposed earlier, is particularly applicable to the Middle East. This revision views security as a three-dimensional concept.[4] In those terms, then, the second dimension of security addresses the state's capacity to exert sovereignty and sovereign control over policy within its territory. This is a political dimension of national security and refers to regime security and civil order. In these terms regime security is the security of government against pressures from society. This includes the capacity to ensure legitimacy of the government and the regime, to ensure domestic support for government policies, and to assure that government policies will effectively deal with challenges to authority created by perceived threats, internal or external, as the case may be.

The third dimension is structural security of states. This dimension refers to the sustainability of the resource base in relation to the pressures and demands of the population. The essential (simplified) relationship is this: if population, in conjunction with prevailing technologies, skills, and social adaptation techniques, places pressures on resources in excess of the prevailing resource base or the capacity to meet pressures, then the security of the state will be threatened. This capacity involves domestic adjustment as well as access to external assistance, support, or resources. The extent and degree of strain depend on the population/resource balances and on the potentials for internal dislocation.

Migration as a Threat to Security

In simple parlance, regime security can be eroded from above (due to threats of a military nature or transgressions on sovereignty) or from below (due to pressures of population demands, given prevailing capabilities to meet demand). A state is secure to the degree that all three dimensions of national security are in place. Because the security of states is the single most important priority for national policy (everything else is derivative), the interconnections among the three dimensions – military, regime, and structural – will define the nature and extent of a state's national security at any point in time and the challenges and obstacles to stability.

Population movements influence national security in fundamental ways. Most notable are the effects on regime security: by shaping claims on governments, by supporting or withdrawing support from the regime, populations on the move thus influence the context and nature of regime security.

A dynamic feedback relationship operates, linking demographic composition and characteristics to government policies and 'output' of regime performance. People in the Middle East region have fought over territory; territorial security and sanctity of borders have been challenged by mobile populations; they have also been protected by in-migrants. For example, both Israel and Lebanon are 'textbook' cases, showing the ubiquity of the mobility–security linkages. The establishment of the state of Israel reflects the intimate connection between population movements and all three dimensions of national security; for states in the region, one or another of these dimensions assumes salience at any point in time.

'Two-Way' Linkages of Demography and Security

In the Middle East there is an intimate connection between population factors and conditions of conflict.[5] Population factors, most notably mobility across

borders, in some cases constitute the key variables in relations among states or in the development of a conflict situation – displacement occurs, refugees are created, numbers change as conflict progresses.

In other cases population movements become parameters, providing the context of the conflict, positioning the antagonists, and drawing the lines of battle. The conflict becomes defined as 'over these people'. In still other cases migration serves as a multiplier by aggravating existing patterns of hostilities and intensifying political disputes. In such instances the mere presence of alien, migrant, or refugee populations provides the logic and rationale for the conflict. Invariably the social order will be disturbed, and social conditions after the movement of people may assume new dimensions.

Ongoing Arab–Israeli–Palestinian dilemmas best approximate a 'textbook' case of the changing role of demographic variables and the centrality of mobility across national boundaries. Establishment of the State of Israel followed the migration of population into the region – a variable over time – as was the exit (or outflow) of Arab population. Once the state was established, these variables had become parameters – they defined the conflict. The Palestinian population, the refugee settlements, the migration for employment to other Arab states were all multipliers. International mobility aggravated the conflict situation and the perceived security of many states in the region. Security and stability became hostage to population movements across national boundaries.

The causal influence goes the other way as well: conflict conditions and security concerns 'push' population movements. The creation of refugees is the most salient of conflict-created demographic factors. The refugee map of the Middle East, highly concentrated on the Palestinians, obscures the fact that there are other refugee flows, though less numerous and less salient politically. The Palestinian refugees, numbered alternatively at 456,600 (by Palestinian sources) or 235,000 (registered in UN sources), illustrate a notable case of impact, namely that under certain conditions refugees become the backbone of the social system in recipient countries, contributing to economic activity and political administration.

This case also illustrates the possibility that 'temporary' refugees can become 'permanent' migrants. Unwanted by Israel, the Palestinians were initially wanted by the Gulf states – but only to some extent and always subject to specific constraints. That they were perceived both as a threat to security and as a necessary condition for development captured the essence of the Palestinian predicament in the region. It was difficult to integrate them (for that would change the social fabric of the recipients); it was difficult to ignore them (for they remain central to inter-Arab conflicts and to regional politics).

And, over time, it is these very same concerns that propelled the actors along trajectories of conflict resolution.

While most refugee flows have been created by violent conflict in the region (such as related to the Polisario in conflicts in the Maghreb or the Kurds in the Mashreq), others have been generated by natural conditions (famine in Sudan) or natural conditions aggravated by political interventions (famine in Ethiopia exacerbated by government policy).

The fact remains, however, that such displacements are extensive in the Middle East. They are especially relevant to political and economic conditions largely because refugees are more likely to become migrant workers than they are to 'return home'. The mechanism creating the flow must thus be distinguished from its consequences. When Somalis place claims on the Sudanese government, when they evoke security, or when the Kurds or Palestinians 'settle', they become part of the recipient's labor force and demographic structure. To the extent that this transfer may take place, it is state policy and government regulations that shape outcomes – not economic conditions or the marketplace.

Recurrent Wars and Demographic Dislocations

The reality that population variables can be the proximate causes of violence is most starkly illustrated by the Lebanese civil war and the conflict in Lebanon. The disposition of population and the contending goals and beliefs continue to make the population factor the single most salient element in the conflict. It is thus a truism in the Middle East that population movements across borders affect the security of states in profound and often pervasive ways. And, the Gulf War of 1991 – and the large-scale exodus – revealed the full measure of these population/security linkages (as noted below). It is not so much the idiosyncrasies in these issues that are fundamental to the Middle East, but the apparent recurrence of these patterns.

Of the many violent conflicts in the Middle East (a rough count of ten approximately sums the entire spectrum to date),[6] seven were particularly severe in their consequences. Five of these were between Israel and the Arab States (in 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973, and 1982). One was between two Arab states and involved the conduct of war within the territory of a third (the Yemen war). One was between one Arab state (Iraq) and a non-Arab state (Iran). Each of these wars was distinctive in its own right and generated its own population dislocations; sometimes new flows and sometimes exacerbating the effects of existing refugees or augmenting their numbers.

The eighth conflict in our count is the war in Lebanon. This war began as an internal dispute, a civil war. The war expanded, broadening in both scale

and scope through the participation of Israel and Syria, each with its own allies in Lebanon and its own goals, objectives, and leverages. The human toll was extensive: the invasion by Israel created new refugees, and the violence has not fully subsided.

Two additional conflicts (ninth and tenth in our count) generated the greatest number of demographic dislocations: the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the attendant war against Iraq. The immediate consequence of the invasion was the flow of refugees from Kuwait – the foreign population that was residing in Kuwait. These included migrant workers and their families and the illegal migrants (and their families) as well as long-term residents of Kuwait that were central to the social order (such as the Palestinians and the Jordanians). Almost overnight the total population of Kuwait shrank (by almost half its initial size), leaving nationals as a near-majority for the first time since the creation of the state.

All countries of the region were affected by the population movements following the invasion and the Gulf War. The impact differed significantly in terms of both scale and scope. But no country escaped the effects. Jordan was a prime target, affected immediately in two ways: through the entry of refugees that were nationals of other countries and through their own nationals that now ranked as 'returnees'. The Gulf War contributed to shaping the most recent phase in the patterns of population movement in the region. The events of 1990 and 1991 created a new layer of mobility – refugees and 'returnees' – that rendered further complexity to an already complex network of population movement.

The invasion of Kuwait and subsequent events set in motion one of the largest streams of population dislocations ever in the region. Over 5.5 million people were dislocated. Roughly 30 countries were affected, to varying degrees. The invasion itself dislocated roughly 2 million people. Of these about 1 million were Egyptians, 380,000 were Kuwaiti citizens, 250,000 were listed as 'Palestinian/Jordanian', and 350,000 were Asians. In addition, about 1–1.5 million Yemenis were pressed to leave Saudi Arabia for political purposes.

The war in the Gulf – pitting the international community against Iraq – generated added refugees. Roughly 65,000 people fled, mainly to temporary destinations. The civil war in Iraq – following the end of the Gulf War – led to an additional set of dislocations. These included roughly 1.5 million Kurds moving from Iraq to Turkey and Iran and about 750,000 Iraqi Shiites fleeing to Iran. Some of this dislocation was temporary in that Kurds returned, as did some of the Iraqis.

The effects of war and dislocation on the refugees and the countries of origin varied extensively. For example, while Egyptians were deeply affected,

the net effects must be viewed in the context of alternative opportunities available to them. By then relations with Libya had already improved substantially, and Egyptian workers had already begun to relocate. To some extent, small to be sure, the Libyan labor market served as an alternative to that of Kuwait. Then, too, it is expected that as reconstruction efforts are mounted – in Kuwait and possibly in Iraq later on – some migration back to the Gulf will take place. As an initial point of asylum, Jordan was deeply affected.

It is a truism, but an important one, that the conjunction of poor economic conditions, massive refugee inflows, and a hostile international community created severe strains on political systems – even on those only indirectly involved. For example, Turkey, too, was affected, but to a different extent and with different consequences. Kurds fleeing from Iraq found Turkey none too hospitable. And the Turks found it difficult to accommodate the other refugees in search of safe haven. In addition to the 1 million Kurds, there were ethnic Turks (roughly 310,000) that had left Bulgaria in 1988 and needed accommodation. And the examples can be extended, with numbers adding up and dislocations creating increasingly severe socioeconomic and political outcomes. The ethnicity factor in this and other conflicts cannot be ignored, and is often significant.[7]

LOW POLITICS: DEMOGRAPHIC SOURCES OF NATIONAL (IN)SECURITY

The basic proposition of this section is that 'high' politics (described above) have been shaped in large part by the patterns of migration. By 'patterns' is meant the phases of migration (trends over time); the poles of migration (concentrations and conglomerations of mobility); and the types of migration (legal status and related issues). Together phases, poles, and types provide evidence of the basic unfolding of the demographic dimensions of security and stability in the Middle East.

Phases of Migration Process

In retrospect there were at least six distinct phases in the migration that took place over the past two decades. Together they established a migration 'system' within which the role of the state became increasingly important. Return migration and refugees due to the Gulf War and its consequences shaped the sixth phase and took in a context where governments at both ends will be playing an important role in managing the consequences – economic, social,

Table 5.1: The Six Phases of Middle East Labor Migration

Phase	*Time Frame*	*of:*	*to:*	*Numbers*	*Type of Regulation*	*Role of State*
I	to 1973	Egyptian and Jordanian teachers & administrators. Algerians. Yemenis. Sudanese.	All points in Arab world. France. Saudi Arabia. Egypt.	circa 1970 – 880,000[1]	Individual initiative. State-to-state missions.	Direct regulation by both sending and receiving countries. Minor individual migration.
II	1973 & period immediately following	Workers from oil-poor Arab nations. Some Indians and Pakistanis.	Services, construction, administration to Gulf countries and Libya.	1975 – 1,800,000[2]	Relaxation on restrictions from labor exporters because of perceived benefits of remittances.	Arab migration largely individual or project-specific.
III	Late 1970s	Workers from oil-poor Arab nations. Indians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis.	Oil-rich and Gulf countries. Many labor markets of Arab Middle East.	Late 1970s – 2,100,000[3] to 2,500,000	Government agencies set up by Asian labor exporters to regulate their workers. Receiving countries not allowing integration of labor.	Arab sending governments encouraged and even competed against other labor exporters. Asian states played direct role in regulating the outflow of their workers.
IV	1980–1982	Chinese, Taiwanese, Indonesian, South Korean, Filipino and Thai workers. Selected Asians.	Most labor-importing countries of the Middle East. Egypt.	Early 1980s – 3,500,000[4] to 4,650,000	The receiving communities assumed direct responsibility for managing the flow. 'Package deals' and bilateral arrangements.	State-to-state interactions ensued.
V	1983–1990	Highly skilled workers rather than unskilled manual workers.	Most labor importers.	Only select estimates for Gulf.	Labor importers beginning to cut back on labor. Attempts to train local nationals.	Labor importers playing a more regulatory role.
VI	1991 and beyond	Asian workers and to a lesser extent Arab workers abroad. Refugees due to interstate and civil wars.	Their respective home countries (return flow), points of transition, and alternative destinations.	The returnees due to market adjustments are variously estimated.[5] Refugees due to violence are estimated at 5.5 million.	Labor contracts not being renewed. Expulsions and cutbacks in staffing needs. Forceful expulsion.	Labor importers playing increasingly regulatory role.[6] Labor exporters search for alternative destinations.

Notes:
1. Farrag (1975).
2. Birks and Sinclair (1980).
3. Pennisi (1981).
4. Choucri and Brecke (1983).
5. An illustration of the magnitude of the return flow is the currently held view that the population of expatriate workers in the UAE has declined by 200,000 (from 1,000,000 to 800,000).
6. As an example of increased regulations in the UAE, all expatriates must now be fingerprinted (*Keesing Contemporary Archives*, 1985).

and political – as will regional and international organizations. These phases have been described elsewhere. Here we stress only the most crucial recent developments over the past decade.

The six phases depicted in Table 5.1 involved both 'exogenous' factors and 'endogenous' adjustments. The exogenous factors can be traced to events in the oil market between 1982 and 1988, when prices appeared to stabilize and demand for labor seemed to reach a plateau. However, demand for migrant workers grew as the oil states adjusted to structural changes and expanded their demand for highly skilled workers. The demand for labor – to meet the demands of added labor – is an endogenous phenomenon, with attendant economy-wide impacts. For example, changes in labor force composition emerged, with a shift toward the migration of more highly skilled labor, a concomitant shift in the sectoral allocation of labor from construction to industry and services, and a relatively small increase in the proportion of East Asian workers.

At first glance return migration, triggered by the dramatic decline of world oil prices, reinforced an emerging trend in the economy of the region, namely cutbacks, anywhere and everywhere. Even such relatively small oil exporters as Egypt faced sharp foreign earnings reductions as world oil prices plummeted. No longer is the fact of return migration the dominant concern, but rather fear of its acceleration. Almost overnight, interdependent labor markets were seeming to revert to traditional national markets controlled by state boundaries. In conjunction with both these exogenous and endogenous processes were the consequences of the Gulf War.

Thus, more recent trends are dominated by the process and the consequences of return – of migrants and of refugees. The political economy of the region beyond 1990 may be of a newer form of interdependence.[8] However, it could also harken back to earlier forms such as those of the 1950s and 1960s where economic fragmentation, rather than interdependence, dominated. However, this is extremely unlikely – if not impossible – since the changes in the decade of the 1970s were so pervasive for all countries in the region that it is not reasonable to postulate a return to the past.

The political demography has been affected, and adjustments to the process and the consequences of return migration must be made. Data on return migration remain unclear, yet evidence of regulations to accelerate return and to eliminate new flows emerges from various sources. A recent study suggests that the net outflow of non-national labor from six Arab Gulf states was in the order of 615,000 (about 12 percent of the total migrant labor) between 1985 and 1987. This estimate includes Asians as well as Arab citizens. A further decline of 3.4 percent was anticipated by 1990. These figures must be taken as indicative at best.

While the prospects of return migration were not unexpected, migrants, their families, their home governments, the host state, and the host employers all recognized that labor mobility was 'temporary' and that permanent settlement was unlikely. At the height of the decades of mobility, however, no one anticipated the speed of the retrenchment that would take place nor its magnitude as the effects of the Gulf War exacerbated the 'normal' consequences of economic slowdown.

Table 5.1 shows, in summary form, the evolution of phases of migration in the Middle East – its features, scale, type of regulation, and role of the state. This table shows patterns over time, but it obscures the issue of migration poles.

The Poles of Mobility

By pole is meant the geographical clusters of concentration: who is going where and for what purpose. Instructive in its own right, this exercise also generates some important information, revealing how political conflicts, diplomatic disputes, and all-out violence can emerge from the fact of population movement. It also pointed to ways in which demographic changes of this sort contribute to other linkages and relationships, creating new forms of interstate coordination and new types of structural interdependence.

The major poles of mobility are (i) the Maghreb, (ii) the Gulf, (iii) the Mashreq, and (iv) the periphery. Each of these poles is characterized by a distinctive set of causes and consequences. These poles also reflect different patterns of linkages between population, security, and relations among nations.

The mobility in the Maghreb region began initially as large-scale migration from North Africa to Europe (principally to France) following the Second World War. Algerians, Moroccans, and Tunisians sought employment in Europe and had become well entrenched in the receiving communities long before the events of 1973. The oil price increases did not substantially alter that pattern of mobility (despite subsequent efforts by France to halt migration), but it served to shape a new stream from the Maghreb to the Gulf region and to Libya.

The mobility in the Mashreq was more of a circular, regional pattern among Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq. People moved in response to political conditions and economic opportunities. And these patterns were nearly autonomous of other streams in the region. They, too, were influenced by the events of 1973. The Mashreq pole continues to be susceptible to local hostilities and remains as vulnerable to the vagaries of the Lebanese civil war as to the aftermath of war in 1991.

The Gulf pole attracted migrants initially from the Arab world, and then from regions further away. The six phases of migration, described above, center to a large extent around political and economic events in the Gulf, and to state responses to these conditions.

Population movement in the periphery refers to migration among Sudan, Somalia, and Yemen, in addition to migration from these three countries to the Gulf. In addition, there is the migration of Sudanese northward to Egypt, a trend that has a longstanding tradition.

These clusters provide the basis for a demographic network – linked by two sets of populations on the move: Egyptians voluntarily migrating everywhere in the region, and the displaced Palestinians. The connective role of Egyptians and Palestinians is undertaken both literally and figuratively. Literally, Egyptians and Palestinians, moving to various parts of the Middle East, rendered services to the recipient communities, in both their politics and their economies. Figuratively, the Palestinians provided a political issue whose impacts reverberated and continue to reverberate throughout the region, affecting both regional and national politics.

Types and Forms of Mobility

The type of migration varies. By type is meant a form of movement defined by a motivation: why are people moving and to what extent is this mobility voluntary. Of the types of population movements in the Middle East which have taken place since the Second World War, seven are particularly noteworthy in their robustness and persistence. These are (i) state-sponsored movements, (ii) migration for employment, (iii) illegal migrants, (iv) religious pilgrims, (v) permanent settlers, (vi) permanent immigrants, and (vii) refugees due to conflict and violence.

Each of these types has different sources and different consequences, and they vary in terms of formal status and of duration. Together they contribute to the dense fabric of mobility, whereby flows interact with levels (and effects of earlier flows) to generate relatively robust socioeconomic and political linkages, connecting various 'ends' of the migration streams.

State-sponsored movements were among the earliest of the flows. These were set in place during the interwar period and then throughout the 1950s and early 1960s by way of assistance from the 'more' developed states to those that were 'less' developed. The secondment and 'mission' programs of Egypt were critical to the establishment of the administrative and related infrastructure capabilities in the Gulf countries and Libya. Such programs were an integral part of Egypt's foreign policy during these years toward many of the other Arab countries. Algeria served as a recipient, as did the

Sudan (at different times and for different reasons). Interestingly, decades later Kuwait, too, mounted its own assistance programs of this sort by contributing manpower to the educational and administrative development of 'less' developed Gulf states.

Migration for employment, a second pattern, was different from the state-sponsored mobility in that it was private-sector driven. Individuals usually sought employment abroad; sometimes in groups and sometimes using the family or related networks. But the activity was 'private', even if it intersected with the state-sponsored programs of secondment and missions. Much of the post-1973 mobility was of that sort, while in earlier decades the state-sponsored form was dominant.

To this day we continue to underestimate the extent of non-legal migration in the Middle East. There is ample evidence to suggest that as much as 25 percent of all foreign labor in Kuwait before the invasion, for example, was illegal. By illegal is meant here a status which is not sanctioned by the government and violates access and employment rules and regulations. In essence this migration constitutes the 'underground' labor market. Despite the apparently effective entry and border controls in the Gulf countries the 'leakage' and 'seepage' may be far larger than formally acknowledged. Kuwait's decision before the war to establish a social security system (in the sense of issuing identity cards, and using identification as a prerequisite for access to social services) was motivated in large part by efforts to curb both the incidence and the social costs of the 'illegal' migration.

The pilgrimage in the Middle East is intimately connected with the politics of the region. This linkage manifests itself in two (nearly identical) ways: the first is the control that Saudi Arabia exerts on regulating the conduct of the pilgrimage, especially access to its territory; and the second is the control that Israel exerts on access to Jerusalem. It goes without saying that both of these patterns are in the realm of 'high' politics despite the fact that religious pilgrimage is 'low' politics.

The arch-case of permanent settlement, obviously, is that of Israel. That settlement is state-based; and it intersects with almost every other form of population movement in the region. So, too, it is sensitive to out-migration (of Jews) from other parts of the world (such as the former Soviet Union). These flows then generate second-order effects by influencing labor structure and employment patterns and, potentially, citizenship rules in the longer run.

Permanent emigrants (outflow) have usually been viewed as part of the 'brain drain' dynamics in the region. Salient during the 1960s and early 1970s, it receded in importance throughout subsequent decades. This recession is due largely to the expansion of economic opportunities in the region, coupled

with the extension of access controls in Europe and elsewhere. Today, the issue of 'brain drain' pales relative to other types of migration patterns.

By far the most dramatic pattern of flow – and the most persistent over time – is that of refugeeism. In an earlier section of this chapter we noted the incidence of wars, the displacements that resulted, and the extent and magnitude of mobility. The distinctive feature is that it is non-voluntary: seldom do people chose to become refugees (despite the reality that in international law the status of 'refugee' is privileged compared with other forms of non-voluntary displacements).

Remarkable as it might be, these forms of mobility in the Middle East contribute, directly as well as indirectly, to a more generic phenomenon throughout the region, namely that of return migration.

Dilemmas of 'Return Migration'

As a relatively new phenomenon in the Middle East, return migration is gradually calling attention to the longer-term robustness of population movements. There are at least three forms of returneeism: one is the voluntary repatriation due to termination of employment elsewhere and the unwillingness to remain in a 'non-legal' status; also relevant here are cases where return is generated by having met the initial financial or other objectives that lead to immigration in the first place.

Second is forced repatriation (reverse refugeeism, so to speak), where conditions of conflict motivate people to return home, or they are forced to do so by virtue of expulsion (as we have seen in the Kuwait–Iraq case). Third is returneeism of a voluntary but temporary nature. This means that individuals leave a country of destination and head for another country (other than the home country). We see numerous patterns of this sort, leading us to generate the hypothesis of 'cycles of migration' whereby individuals 'try out' different recipient countries and employment conditions and are willing to remain on the move for long duration – but seldom toward the same destination.

Return migration, in itself, creates new policy challenges for both sending and receiving countries (at the macro-level) and for individual decision and choice (at the micro-level). Increasingly, returneeism is becoming a salient aspect of the overall mobility fabric in the region. And that reality interjects a new element in the policy matrix at both ends of the migration stream.

POLICY PATTERNS: RESPONSES OF SENDERS AND RECEIVERS

From a policy perspective the issue of responses – of both sending and receiving countries – involves the issue of rules and that of formal interventions.

Together these constitute the parameters of the policy patterns designed to manage migration of people across national boundaries.

Rules of Entry and Exit

On a global scale, policy toward migration is generally defined in terms of rules of access. What states do to control borders, how they do it, and the rules and instruments that they use, all constitute the access regulations.[9] It is also true that countries vary in terms of the direction of control, i.e., whether they wish to manage entry or exit, or both. Seldom are the rules of access independent of political orientation and of the priorities of the system and its leadership. Finally, it is perhaps most ironic of all that despite the prevalence of sophisticated modes of border controls, few countries are able to exert the control they desire to the extent that they wish.

Studies of international migration policy generally converge on the proposition that rules of access for each country are not independent of the access rules of adjacent countries. There is a form of interdependence in the policy domain – with population as the connective – that makes national policy on migration hostage to geographical location and to the attributes, behaviors, and policies of neighbors.

For example, the 'open door' policy of Western countries toward defection from the communist bloc during the Cold War was justified in part by the recognition of the authoritarian nature of communism, but also by the realization that Eastern bloc migration policy was preventative in nature, not permissive. And, with the end of the Cold War and the collapse of communist regimes, the repressive policy was replaced by a permissive one. At that point, the 'open door' policy of the West gave way to a regulative and preventative posture. In essence, there was a difference between granting haven to an occasional defector versus granting haven to entire segments of population.

So, too, migration policy and specific rules of access are not independent of citizenship policy, employment prospects, labor conditions, and, most importantly of all, perceptions of security and insecurity. Again, the European case shows the interconnections and the ways in which citizenship and access rules are closely related. For example, German citizenship law, in theory, is extendable to German-speaking populations residing in areas beyond the jurisdiction of the German state. In practice, it would be difficult to apply the theory and grant to all German-speaking populations the rights and obligations due to citizens of the German state.

Analogous issues pertain to the Middle East, making the definitions of citizenship, and variation among rules of citizenship and access, among the most sensitive strategic and political issues.

Migration Policy in the Middle East

In the Middle East several propositions summarize prevailing patterns of migration policy and citizenship regulations. First, 'scarce' population relative to resources and level of technology predisposes states to encourage importation of people (skilled and unskilled) but prohibition of access to citizenship (i.e., the Gulf states, principally).

Second, political transitions, such as from authoritarian polities to more liberal ones or the reverse, are generally accompanied by shifts in rules of access. The 'textbook' case in this connection is the abolition of the exit visa in Egypt following the Nasser regime and the ushering in of the 'open door' policy of the Sadat succession.

Third, in the region as elsewhere, the discretionary granting of citizenship (by the regime) is used as a reward or as recognition of 'service' or 'value' (again, the Gulf countries serve as the best examples, but so does the case of Egypt, an 'exporting' country when it seeks to facilitate specific forms of political support to non-nationals).

Fourth, with the exception of Iraq, citizenship in the Middle East is defined in national terms bounded by territorial obligations. It is also hereditary and non-negotiable (i.e., 'giving up' citizenship is not an option, in the sense that legal provisions are absent for the eventuality). Only Iraq grants its citizenship to nationals of any other Arab states upon the asking.

Fifth, again with the exception of Iraq, immigration in the Arab countries is not the route to citizenship. And in Israel it is a restricted route, in the sense that it is applicable only to Jews. Emerging in this connection is a new policy dilemma in Israel, namely how to manage, regulate, or control access of Jews claiming to be members of 'the lost tribes'.

The foregoing reflects not only underlying economic conditions and national profile characteristics but also dominant political ethos and preferences. If anything, the rules of access in the Middle East are best characterized as limited in resilience. This is not to say that they are effective (since as much as 25 percent of foreign labor in Kuwait has been estimated to be there 'illegally') but that the rules do not appear to be responsive either to empirical realities (labor issues) or to pressures of people on the political system. Even in the case of Egypt in the transition to Sadat, the 'open door' was initiated top down, i.e., as an initiative of the leadership, not in response to 'pressures' from the population.

But the basic facts remain: regardless of the formal policy in place, people tend to 'make their way' as best they can – even if it is not consistent with the goals of leaderships. In the Middle East the micro-politics of population movement shapes the macro-realities of demographic outcomes.

CONCLUSION

If there is one lesson to be learned from migration in the Middle East case, it is that people matter, and they matter a lot. Population factors – especially mobility – are fundamental to the structure of the state, the nature of sovereignty, the polity, and the economy. Israel was created by an inflow of population; Lebanon was fundamentally affected by disagreements over the political rights and obligations of contending ethnic groups – and changes in their numbers in both relative and absolute terms. The invasion of Kuwait was an event triggered more by disputes over resources (oil and oil policy) than other matters, but the effects led to fundamental dislocations in the populations of both countries – the state invaded and, subsequently, the invading state. The 'low' politics of population movement affects the 'high' politics of the region – the disputes, contentions, conflicts, and modes of resolution and conceptions of the future. How much has changed, and how much remains unaltered?

The fact of mobility across borders has not changed, but both the sources and the consequences – political as well as economic – have changed substantially over time. Each new phase and new sets of events are set in the context of preceding trends and patterns – and memories and legacies. Population movement within the region is a permanent feature of both its strategic map and its political economy.

It is of great salience to all states in the Middle East; the 'importers' and the 'exporters' as well as those that both 'import' and 'export' people. The salience remains for both voluntary mobility and for dislocations due to conflict and violence. By definition, therefore, the settlement of conflict must involve attention to and management of these movements. Most immediate are the pressures for reconstruction in Kuwait (and clean-up of environmental effects of war and of preparations for war). Reconstruction in Kuwait and eventually in Iraq and in Lebanon will require manpower. The conditions are in place for shaping the next migration streams.

Security Considerations

As long as state borders remain permeable – as they are almost everywhere – then the migration process remains inherently dynamic: changes in the demographic profile influence the characteristics of the labor market and the social order; government policies to regulate or respond to these changes will affect attendant patterns of migration and hence the society's population characteristics. Even when societies become 'closed', borders remain permeable; it is difficult to exercise control over national boundaries.

In the process of exercising control, the state plays an important role in at least three ways: by seeking to regulate or influence the crossing of borders, by controlling the activities of non-nationals, and by managing or shaping the responses of nationals to the presence of non-nationals. Issues of political culture and political sovereignty are evoked.

Over the long term the varieties and types of interdependence generated as a result of mobility of people across national boundaries generally produce new constraints on national policy and state behavior as well as new ways in which domestic factors and external ones interrelate. When domestic interests become affected – or created – by mobility of population, migration itself can become a significant element in domestic politics, and the migrants become players in their own right.

Political objectives and capabilities of states facilitate or impede market mechanisms. In the case of international migration, where crossing state boundaries defines the phenomenon, the 'market' seldom operates unimpeded. The state, its goals, and its instruments regulate one important characteristic of statehood, namely the population within national boundaries. For international migration, the reality of statehood influences the nature and the type of mobility.

A corollary of the reality that the movement of people influences relations among nations is that international mobility also contributes to interdependence among countries and states. In some special circumstances, this interdependence may generate forms of cooperation, even agreement, among states to regulate or facilitate mobility across borders.

The nature and extent of the effects of population movements are contingent on numbers, composition, and regulations in sending and receiving states. Inherent in government response is the protection of the sanctity of the state and of the privileges of its citizens. Threats to stability are almost always conceived in terms of competing demands on the regime and contending claims for rights and privileges. Far from being a passive recipient for nationals of other states, both the sending and the receiving countries' governments can be active agents. The Middle East is a region where migrants – for whatever reason – can literally become policy instruments of 'receiving' as well as 'sending' states.

Implications for Theory and Policy

The movement of people across national borders – whatever the causes or the consequences – affects the characteristics of states at both ends of the 'transaction'. To the extent that the numbers are large, such movements may disturb the internal balance among the elements of national profiles, that is,

the population, resources, and technology variables. Under the most 'normal' of circumstances, the movement of people across national boundaries generates a whole set of second-order linkages. These include remittances, institutional arrangements in response to remittances, foreign policy priorities reshaped by the fact of migration, and new economic sensitivities and vulnerabilities among states, with attendant effects on the polity.

In the short run, international migration across national boundaries is likely to affect the composition of the population and influence the relationship to resources and to the prevailing levels of knowledge and skills. To the extent that these changes are significant, then the character of the state will be affected, as its national profile is adjusted to perturbations in the initial population–resources–technology balances.

In the longer run, changes in the state profile – propelled by the movement of populations across national boundaries – affect the context within which decisions are made and provide new parameters for national policy on access, employment, and citizenship and shape new concerns about security, stability, and identity.

The element of time is especially relevant, as directions of influences 'both ways': there is a dynamic process as policies are set in place in response to needs and demands (given supply conditions), but as population movements persist, these demand and supply conditions may change, create new social and political effects, and generate pressures for new migration policies and new rules of entry and exit. In the Middle East and elsewhere, the effects of time are cumulative and reinforcing.

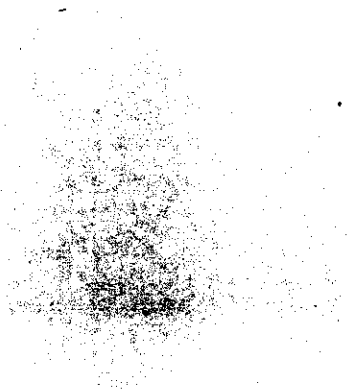
Given the conflicts in the region as well as the interdependence among the states, decisions affecting population are increasingly susceptible to external influences. In some cases the process itself of making decisions may become internationalized.

All of this reinforces the 'low' politics roots of 'high' politics in the Middle East and the persisting interconnections of demography and security. There is almost no scenario that can be credibly envisaged for the region's future that decouples population and migration on the one hand, from security and stability, on the other.

NOTES

1. Added complications are created by unsettled state boundaries in many regions of the Middle East. For a review of current status see George Joffé in this book.

2. Theoretical justification of the choice of these variables is presented in North 1990, and Choucri 1993.
3. Choucri 1986.
4. Choucri et al. 1990.
5. Choucri 1974. The following is an adaptation from the analyses in Choucri 1984.
6. The following listing is consistent with, but not identical to, the listing in Table 1 in Ibrahim 1995.
7. See Ibrahim 1995.
8. See Bahgat Korany's chapter in this book for a related assessment.
9. Weiner 1993.



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