An Analysis of Regional Alliances: The Concert of Europe and the Arab League

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Abstract

There is scarce existing literature regarding the intersection of domestic politics and regional alliance behavior in the discipline of international relations. To comprehensively understand the dynamics of regional peace, security, and conflict, it is necessary to account for the domestic politics of states involved in regional alliances. By utilizing the Concert of Europe and the Arab League to analyze the importance of domestic politics in the formation, stability, and effectiveness of regional alliance systems, a coherent understanding of the hidden significance of domestic politics in regional alliance systems will emerge. By utilizing dynamic case studies, I demonstrate that favorable domestic political conditions can produce highly effective collective security agreements, while volatile domestic politics can actually increase violence amongst the members/states in regional alliance systems.
Introduction

What domestic conditions, if any, motivate states to form regional alliances? Furthermore, why are some regional alliance systems more successful at reducing conflict than others? Understanding the domestic policies that are harmful to alliance stability or, conversely, those domestic strategies that are particularly conducive to alliance effectiveness provides a framework for fostering peace in some of the modern era’s most turbulent regions. The fact that domestic policy plays a significant role in the motivation for forming a defensive regional alliance system or collective security agreement is already accepted in international relations literature within the context of regime type and democracy. A multitude of scholars have proven that democratic member states in regional alliances do not fight wars with one another, meaning they are more likely to uphold their alliance agreements with other democracies (Russett 1993, pg.4). There has also been substantial evidence suggesting that democracies are more likely to uphold their international commitments in general, and are better able to signal their intentions to member states within their regional alliance (Owen 2005, pg.73). The existing scholarship surrounding democratic regimes and regional alliance behavior is relevant because it provides an avenue to investigate the effect of other domestic characteristics on regional alliance behavior in alliances composed of non-democracies.

While the case study approach has limitations in academic discourse, it is best suited for this kind of hypothesis because it allows and in-depth examination of the motivations behind alliance formation in two complex regional examples. Such an intentional hypothesis is better served by minute details that case study research allows, rather than numerical generalizations in empirical research. To discuss the intersection of domestic politics and regional alliances, I
utilize the Concert of Europe and the Arab League. The Concert of Europe was revolutionary in the study of alliance politics because it represented a paradigm shift in inter-political relationships among the Great Powers of Europe. Inspired by events in the eighteenth century, the Concert of Europe began in 1815 at the Congress of Vienna and persisted until the onset of the Crimean War in 1853. The Concert of Europe lasted nearly four decades and resulted in the time period of “long peace” for Europe that did not return until the end of World War II. The second case study I employ is the Arab League, an entente established by the Middle Eastern states in 1945. The Arab League is consequential to the study of alliance politics because it provides a glimpse into the challenges facing new states as they emerged from western imperialism. The Arab League served, and continues to serve, as a nonaggression pact between the Arab states as well as a defensive alliance against all foreign intervention in the Middle East and particularly, the state of Israel. The Arab League is a dynamic case study that involves complex regional and global issues and is a more realistic depiction of the effects of domestic politics on alliance systems. A more thorough historical analysis of the Concert of Europe and the Arab League will emerge in Chapters II and III.

The choice of the Concert of Europe and the Arab League is deliberate because it allows for speculation into what circumstances beyond domestic politics influence the motivations, effectiveness, and durability of regional alliance systems. The Concert of Europe and the Arab League represent two distinct political sprits; the Middle East was organized into sovereign states only a decade before the creation of the Arab League while Europe was the birth place of the Westphalian state system and thus was organized by territorial and political sovereignty for nearly two centuries prior to the formation of the Concert of Europe. This distinction had tremendous effects on the formation and effectiveness of both regional alliances in question. The
generational gap is another reason why the Concert of Europe and the Arab League are useful institutions to contrast, because such an analysis depicts how regional alliances have evolved over time and shows how time has influenced global politics, thus influencing regional alliances. There is existing literature demonstrating that alliances in the nineteenth century are characterized by higher degrees of peace, while those in the twentieth century are associated with increased regional violence. This scholarship will be investigated further in Chapter I.

In the context of this paper, *domestic politics/policies* is indicative of the existing social order and governmental organization of political affairs in the country, or any political movements within the state that effects the existing domestic institutions. When discussing *regional alliances* in the subsequent analysis, the definition for the term can be understood to mean an agreement between two or more states to defend one another in the event of war. The scope of this paper is limited to understanding the role of domestic politics in defensive alliances, and does not account for any alliance behavior that is offensive in nature. Finally, both the Concert of Europe and the League of Arab States were long-term alliances, and as Chapter II and III will demonstrate, both alliances were used as a pretext for increased interaction among regional powers (Owen 2005, pg.74). This is a common characteristic among regional alliance systems, particularly after the Concert of Europe.

Finally, the terms *success* and *failure* when discussing the Concert of Europe and the Arab League are assessing the ability of the respective alliances to mitigate regional conflict through engaging with alliance members. Therefore, success is not measured in the longevity of the alliance, but rather the ability of the alliance to create regional peace.
Chapter 1: A Survey of Alliances Politics

Before analyzing historical applications of regional military alliances in the context of the Concert of Europe and the Arab League, it is necessary to establish a theoretical framework of regional alliance politics and account for essential questions regarding the formation, stability, motivation, and risk involved with defensive military alliances. An in-depth analysis of the factors that determine the success of an alliance will establish a criterion for avoiding military conflict—the stated goal of international relations (Snyder 1997, pg.4). Understanding theoretical concepts in alliance politics will serve as a guide for analyzing the Concert of Europe and the Arab League in later chapters.

Theoretical Approaches

Within the discipline of international relations, scholars agree that states act in accordance with their interests, and similar to all actions that states undertake, alliances are used as a tool to further those interests (Freidan, Lake, Schultz 2013, pg.46). The two traditional paradigms of thought in international relations, realism and liberalism, interpret the intrinsic value of military alliances differently, thus the ideology a state adheres to contributes to how it views and utilizes alliances as a political and military tool. Understanding a given state’s ideological leanings can help predict that state’s future behavior in a regional military alliance, thus reducing the uncertainty for potential alliance members about the state’s intentions. The realist interpretation of alliance utility rests in the notion of state survival and, reminiscent of the late nineteenth century, realist international actors use alliances to attain specific security goals. In his book, Alliance Politics, Glenn Snyder fervently argues that states only engage in regional military alliances when their own security is enhanced (Snyder 1997, pg.51). Central to the
realist concern of state survival is the concept of relative power. The positional orientation of the state, or the idea that the state must maintain relatively more power than neighboring states, is the main hindrance between realist international theory and alliance formation (Greico 1988, pg.602). According to Joseph Greico, realist states struggle to commit to regional alliances because, while participation may benefit their own interests, it may also advances the interests of other states thereby lowering their own margin of power over their adversaries (Greico1988, pg.604). While the realist interpretation allows for fluid alliances that are in the state’s current best interest, the element of unapologetic self-interest in alliance formation can make credible cooperation and reliability difficult concepts for realist states to communicate to potential alliance members (Greico 1988, pg.601).

It is clear that the formation of regional alliances is driven by necessity for those who adhere to realism rather than a desire to increase global interconnectivity, but is necessity sufficient to explain why a realist state would commit to protect its competitors? Traditionally, an alliance is a security apparatus with a target audience that lies outside of its own membership and seeks to display the joint capabilities of all member states to potential adversaries (Snyder 1997, pg.4). However, David Bearce argues that states may form or join alliances to exhibit their military capabilities to other member states, making any future deterrent threats to member states more credible because a potential aggressor within the alliance would have full knowledge of the state’s military resources, and with complete information about the military commitment needed to defeat the state in question, the aggressor would chose to avoid military conflict (Bearce 2006, pg.3). This concept is exceedingly relevant for the Arab League in the late twentieth century, and the Middle Eastern case study will reveal that the above behavior has been notoriously undertaken by states that adhere to realism, implying that in addition to using alliances to deter
adversaries, realist states are also motivated to join alliances to communicate military capabilities to other alliance members in order to obtain military transparency and deterrence.

Conversely, the theoretical tenets of liberalism - such as increased interdependency among nation-states, commitment to bilateral cooperation, and an emphasis on democratic values - leads supporters of liberalism to view alliances in a positive light not only because they aid in achieving the state’s own goals, but because global cooperation is increased. For liberal international theorists, alliances do not exclusively serve temporary political interests, but alternatively are conduits for long-term meaningful engagement among member states. Therefore, alliances as utilized by liberal states are not oriented towards one goal, but are an avenue to increase overall cooperation (Lemmons 2012, pg.2). Liberalism is often characterized as passive, and the concept of an alliance is synonymous with forgoing state interests in the name of peace. However, in his work “Why the World’s Only Superpower Can’t Go it Alone,” Joseph Nye demonstrates that increased global cooperation does not necessarily mean a nation is not serving its own interests (Nye 2002, pg.159). In the modern American context, Nye views multilateral involvement in the international system as a necessary component for maintaining the United States’ international dominance. The central argument for this theory is that participation in the international system through alliances will increase the duration of American global hegemony because it will provide a disincentive for nations to align against the United States (Nye 2002, pg.159).

Beyond theoretical concepts, history reveals that states use liberal and realist ideologies in statecraft, often in conjunction with one another. Therefore, while it is useful to understand the ideological leanings of states in the Concert of Europe and the Arab League, ideology cannot
completely answer the questions of (1) why states commit to fight another state’s war and (2) how successful defensive military alliances are once agreed upon.

State Motives in Military Alliances

Why does a state engage in a military alliance that commits its people, military, and natural resources to fight another country’s war? To understand why a state enters into alliances is to understand its national weaknesses and its international goals, two components that are important considerations for the case study analyses of the Concert of Europe and the Arab League. Snyder argues that at the core of the decision to join a military alliance there is a cost-benefit analysis (Snyder1997, pg.45). The benefits of defensive military alliances are many, but the primary advantage is the promise of protection. Defensive military alliances, the nature of both the Concert of Europe and the Arab League, provide deterrent benefits to each member of the alliance, meaning that committing to a military alliance decreases the probability that a state will be attacked because the aggressor knows that the state in question is not unitary (Snyder 1997, pg.43). Alliances increase the military calculus and strategic interaction for an aggressive actor, thus increasing the risk and ultimately reducing the incentive to be aggressive. Furthermore, in the event that the deterrent threat of the military alliance is insufficient to stop an aggressive state from taking military action on a member state, members of the alliance will respond to the attack, thus increasing the probability of allied success and aggressor defeat (Snyder 1997, pg.43).

However, there are also subliminal and insidious benefits of military alliances that center around Thomas Schelling’s concept of strategic interaction. The first is that military alliances allow all member states to know one another’s military capabilities, thus increasing deterrence amongst allies (Snyder 1997, pg.43; Bearce 2006, pg.3). Military alliances also inadvertently
decrease the relative power of one coalition and strengthen another, which occurs when one ‘bloc’ or alliance absorbs another state into its alliance system effectively precluding the ability of the new member state to join the opposition’s alliance (Snyder 1997, pg.43). Finally, military alliances, particularly for powerful states, provide increased influence over other member states, an issue that has plagued the Arab League since its inception.

The costs of engaging in a military alliance are equally as numerous as the benefits. The most obvious cost is the state’s binding commitment to contribute military assets to fight a war that it would rather not fight in the absence of commitment (Snyder 1997, pg.44). Military engagement and combat is costly on resources, but has the potential to impose monumental audience costs on a regime under precise conditions of domestic unrest. In addition, the moral hazard problem demonstrates how the actions of other alliance members can be costly to the entire alliance. The moral hazard problem, or state irresponsibility, is the idea that once a state has secured its position in a defensive military alliance, the state may begin to act in ways that provoke enemies and increase the risk of general war, thus making its allies more vulnerable through its actions. In the Arab case study of collective security, Egypt’s actions presented the moral hazard problem and resulted in the ultimate cost of any alliance, war. Other costs of participating in a military alliance include the possibility of a counter-alliance, the state’s inability to align with another more beneficial alliance, and a general reduction of the state’s freedom of action.

Snyder argues that alliance politics is not simply a cost-benefit analysis, and depending on the size and breath of a given state’s power its incentive structure to be part of an alliance will change (Snyder 1997, pg.45). For example, small states have a greater need for defensive military alliances than larger ones because smaller states need protection. But what does the
large state get in return? Recall the argument of Joseph Nye on the United States’ global hegemony: large states protect smaller states and in return they receive loyalty, soft power, economic influence, and territory to build and expand their military capabilities. This discussion demonstrates that when analyzing alliance politics it is necessary to investigate state intentions in a dynamic and multifaceted fashion.

Success of Military Alliances

Scholars have long debated the effectiveness of alliances, some arguing that alliances are pacific in nature while others are convinced that alliances actually increase the likelihood of war and general conflict. There are numerous historical examples and rational scenarios to support both perceptions. Those who support alliances as a mechanism of peace argue that military alliances help reduce uncertainty among international actors, leading to a reduced number of miscalculations in statecraft that result in conflict (Levy 1981, pg.582). The most vocal proponents of the latter opinion are balance of power theorists such as John Mearsheimer and Hans Morgenthau. The balance of power theory suggests that one individual state gaining excessive military capabilities places the surrounding states at risk; therefore, participating in an alliance is a way to counteract a potential overly aggressive state. In an alliance that is intended to maintain a balance of power, the most famous example being the Concert of Europe, each state agrees to align against the overly aggressive state in the event conflict (Kaplan 1957, pg.23).

Conversely, there are those who view the military alliance as a destabilizing force and argue that the formation of alliances may result in a counter alliance, arms race, and/or regional mobilization in the event of war- increasing both the prospect and scope of conflict (Levy 1981, pg.583). The latter of the two opposing views on the impact of alliances on peace is undoubtedly
the more widely accepted worldview, with scholars drawing on the World Wars of the twentieth century for theoretical support. Interestingly, empirical evidence suggests that the answer to whether alliances create war or peace may be generational. Examining the time period between 1816 and 1965, David Singer and Melvin Small concluded that nineteenth century alliances were more closely associated with peace while those in the twentieth century were more closely associated with war (1967). The reasons for this evolution can be argued to be completely independent from alliance and war, and instead can be explained by the changing domestic political patterns that occurred in Europe between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Most notably, the dominant regional regime type changed from a monarchy to a representative government, and with this evolution ideas of state sovereignty and national identity became embedded in the national social psyche. It is clear that the relationship between the military alliance and war has evolved throughout the previous three centuries, and arguably, domestic concepts such as nationalism and representative government have had drastic effects on the relationship between the nation-state, defensive allies, the state’s constituency, and war.

Acknowledging that certain alliances are successful, while others collapse when pressured, it begs the question of what factors contribute to alliances’ resilience and failure. Bearce places value in the power distribution within the alliance itself as a strategy to determine if alliances foster peace or war. Bearce theorizes that the power distribution within an alliance has an effect on the longevity and stability of an alliance due to the “information effect,” or the idea that military alliances reduce asymmetric information of offensive capabilities among member states and decrease the likelihood of war (Bearce et al 2006, pg.595). He concludes that the information of military capabilities provided by alliance transparency matters most for alliances that are near power parity, or in alliance systems in which each state has relatively
equal military capabilities (Bearce et al 2006, pg.596). Therefore, according to Bearce’s research, the potential effectiveness of an alliance creating peace could rest in the internal distribution of power: those alliances with relatively equal capabilities may create a more peaceful environment because each state knows the other’s capabilities and doubts its own ability to win in a general war (Bearce et al 2006, pg. 596). A more simplistic way to comprehend Bearce’s research may be to imagine the inverse, if one powerful state benefits from the information effect and learns that it has the most expansive capabilities, that state would have the incentive to exercise its power over the other members of the alliance in some fashion.

Bearce’s research regarding power distribution and alliance success holds true in the Concert of Europe case study; the Great Powers of Europe were near power parity and fostered a very successful and durable alliance. However, power distribution was not the central cause the concert’s success, as Chapter II will demonstrate.

The duration of an alliance can also determine if it is a success or failure, distinguishing between ad hoc alliances and permanent alliances. Ad hoc defensive military alliances are those that are formed in response to a collective threat that is posed by a sudden change in the regional balance of power, and in the view of balance of power theorists, ad hoc alliances are necessary for counterbalancing aggressive actors (Levy 1981, pg.583). Those that adhere to balance of power theory make a sharp distinction between ad hoc alliances and permanent alliances, viewing ad hoc alliances as vital, and permanent alliances as detrimental to international peace and security. Permanent alliances cancel the utility and pacific qualities of ad hoc alliances because, by virtue of being permanent, they do not allow the international system to adapt to new threats and restore equilibrium (Morgenthau 1967, pg.335). This could be one reason for the narrative of failure surrounding the Arab League, the permanent nature of the alliance in theory
leaves member states unable to adapt to new threats. Elements of this phenomenon are seen in
the rise of Iraq as an offensive regional actor in the 1980s and 1990s. Iraq’s assent to regional
power was characterized by two wars with Iran and Kuwait, the latter war ultimately leading to
the United States’ intervention into the Middle East. The argument can be made that if the Arab
League was not a permanent alliance, the Middle Eastern nations would have been able to
counter Iraq with precision without needing foreign assistance. It can be generally stated that in a
volatile international system, permanent alliances and alliances with an indefinite duration are
conducive to failure. Finally, aspects of the states involved, as well as the international system,
can determine the success or failure of a military alliance. Regime type is a key variable that can
increase the probability of a durable and committed alliance, and consistent with other
international behavior, democracies are the exception with regards to alliance duration.
Scholarship has proven that alliances among multiple strong democracies are the most stable and
effective at mitigating international and regional crisis (Reed 1997, pg.1078). William Reed
found that democracies enjoy higher rates of success in military alliances because they are able
to more effectively commit to collective defense, due to “normative characteristics and domestic
political structure” (Reed 1997, pg.1078).

With regards to the previous analysis, a relatively trivial amount of research has been
dedicated to the intersection of alliance formation and domestic politics; however, these two
independent notions are central to understanding the motivations for the formation of the Concert
of Europe and the Arab League. The goal of the remaining chapters is to determine the extent to
which domestic politics influence regional alliance systems. The central question is whether or
not domestic politics has an effect on a nation-state’s decision to create or join a regional military
alliance and, in the aftermath of formation, if domestic politics play a role in the effectiveness of
the alliance at mitigating violence. Rather, do domestic threats shared by all regional
governments force leaders to reconcile their differences to ensure the continued survival of the
regime? John Owen’s research on regime ideology and regional alliance systems best frames this
narrative: “..the likelihood that alliances will form along ideological lines increases with the fear
among at least two governments of ideology $A$ that are threatened by the transitional rivalry of
ideology $B$ (Owen 2005, pg.73).”

The reason for this phenomenon lies in the demonstration effect. Nations that adhere to a
particular ideology fear their populations will observe the benefits of another rival ideology and
subsequently demand political change that would remove the incumbent leader from power. When multiple leaders in a given region fear their ideological hold is being threatened by a rival ideology, they have an incentive to create an international alliance that is intended to
domestically oppose the new ideology (Owen 2005, pg.73). This concept will be more
thoroughly explored in later chapters in the context of the Concert of Europe in the aftermath of
the French Revolution.

The Arab League presents a different set of domestic variables that potentially affect the
stability and formation of the collective security agreement. While the Arab League did have
common enemies, there was also the influence of intense domestic nationalism and deep mistrust
amongst alliance members. Chapter III will explore the effects of these domestic concerns on the
regional alliance system.

In the above overview on the characteristics that determine alliance formation, success,
and behavior, the notion of domestic motivations and structure has repeatedly emerged as a
dominant factor in the formation and maintenance of defensive military alliances and collective
security organizations. Through utilizing the Concert of Europe and the Arab League, the
remaining chapters demonstrate how favorable domestic political conditions can produce highly
effective collective security agreements, while volatile domestic politics can actually increase
violence amongst the members-states
Chapter II- The European Case Study of the 19th Century

The Concert of Europe was a fundamental deviation from the norms of political relations among regional powers. Rene Albrecht Carrie contends that the Concert of Europe created the modern notion of establishing a man-made balance of power through restraining one’s own interests to level the capabilities of the region (Carrie 1968, pg.3). The member-states of the Concert of Europe were the first, and arguably the most, successful concert system that consciously engineered a framework in which all states had “an equal right to exist and none could entertain a universal claim to domination” (Carrie 1968, pg.3). The purpose of the Concert of Europe, and all Great Power concerts, was to mitigate regional conflict through communication on key issues of political and military importance. Concert diplomacy can be understood to be the opposite of traditional realpolitik diplomacy because member-states enter into a formal agreement to ally against any state within the alliance that is displaying offensive behavior and threatens to upset the balance of power in the region (Kupchan 1995, pg.53; Rasmussen 2001, pg.205; Kissenger 1992, pg.4). This means that states enter into concert agreements with the knowledge that any effort on their behalf to increase their own relative power will result in alienation and conflict. In the context of this analysis, concert diplomacy can be understood as a new avenue to maintain survival in an evolving, and potentially antagonistic, political system. Prior to the Concert of Europe, each state ensured survival through building fortified military capabilities and strategy; however, in 1815 at the Congress of Vienna there was a paradigm shift in how sovereign states chose to maintain their survival. Rather than striving for regional hegemony, member-states abandoned their individual quest for dominance and resolved to collaborate diplomatically to ensure regional peace.
Motivations to Form the Concert of Europe

What motivated the Great Powers of Europe to suddenly, and drastically, alter their behavior from stark realism in the 18th century to a successful experiment with liberalism in the early to mid-19th century? Furthermore, why was this particular experiment with concert diplomacy exceptionally successful at fostering regional peace? The existing literature contends that the Concert of Europe was formed in response to increased international aggression and the reoccurring pattern of severe armed conflict inspired by the Napoleonic Wars (Elrod 1976, pg.161; Kissenger 1957, pg.58). The established narrative asserts that, as the degree of regional anarchy reached unprecedented levels with the assent of Napoleon in France, the remaining Great Powers of Europe (Prussia, Russia, Austria, and Great Britain) sought to mitigate the regional chaos through communication and self-restraint (Elrod 1976, pg.162). However, the domestic circumstances of each individual state involved in the Concert of Europe are largely ignored in the previously mentioned narrative, and existing theory fails to account for the possible domestic motivations that influenced the Great Powers to enter into a collective security agreement. This chapter will investigate plausible domestic incentives to join the Concert of Europe and will argue that the Great Powers may have been practicing self-restraint in an effort to maintain the status quo in Europe, however they were forced down this path by domestic self-interest.

To grasp the factors that motivated the Great Powers of Europe to establish the Concert of Europe, it is necessary to briefly understand the social and political revolution that was sweeping the European continent. The eighteenth century witnessed radical social changes driven by Enlightenment theory that fundamentally challenged the existing role of the individual within the state system. Elements of the European population began to question their role in
government and in the social order of their nation; enlightenment thinkers formulated ideas that promoted representative government and the “general will” of the people in determining the nation’s leaders and political orientation (Rousseau 1762, The Social Contract; Locke 1689, Two Treatises of Government; Montesquieu 1750, The Spirit of Laws). Enlightenment ideology found fertile ground in France, where early urbanization was driving down wages while simultaneously increasing bread and rent prices, fostering harsh economic and social burdens for the French people. In addition to the masses suffering from the side effects of the initial wave of industrialization, the French government was largely unresponsive to the needs of the people and lavished in explicit wealth.

The historical details of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars are beyond the scope of this analysis, but their domestic effects on France and the surrounding nation-states cannot be understated. The ideology central to the French Revolution was founded upon the role of man as a citizen rather than a subject, a world in which individuals had a degree of self-determination in political and social affairs. This notion directly challenged the existing status quo of politics in Europe for the Prussian, Russian, and Austrian Empire, where the power of the monarch and the royal family was absolute and divine. Recall from Chapter I that states only enter into defensive military alliance systems when their own security is enhanced (Snyder 1997, pg. 51). In the Concert of Europe the Great Powers were enhancing their security against a rival ideology, enlightened liberalism, rather than a military force, but this fact should not diminish the tangible threat. The idea that individuals could exercise choice in the domestic political sphere directly challenged the existing regimes in continental Europe and this fact can help to explain why the Great Powers suddenly altered their international political behavior in 1815 from aggressive, zero-sum interactions to self-restraint. Put simply, enlightened liberalism
threatened the survival of existing regimes in a way that no fortified military could defend against.

Micro-foundational Approach in Austria

The fears and policy actions of the bureaucratic elite in the Austrian Empire best reflect the domestic impact of enlightenment theory on absolute monarchies; therefore, while the Prussian and Russian Empire had separate and relevant concerns, such as nationalism in Prussia and revolutionary tendencies in Russian controlled Poland, an analysis of domestic actions and reactions in Austria will serve as proxy for understanding the domestic politics of each of the Great Power empires.

In late 1794, Austria witnessed the first tangible domestic repercussions from the French Revolution. Austrian security forces uncovered a revolutionary scheme in Vienna, referred to as the so-called “Jacobin Plot,” that was organized by leading liberal-radicals who sought to overthrow the Habsburg dynasty and establish a representative democracy (Whiteside 1962, pg.6; Epstein 1966, pg.474). This event permanently changed the tone of the Austrian monarchy. The Austrian bureaucratic elite and royal family possessed evidence that liberal political thought threatened their survival, which ultimately encouraged their decision to form the Concert of Europe. Moreover, throughout the high years of the Concert of Europe, Austria became increasingly more conservative and repressive (Whiteside 1962, pg.6).

The individual prompting the Austrian Empire to drive domestic policy farther right on the political spectrum was Clemens von Metternich, the Foreign Minister for Austria and the principal engineer of the Concert of Europe along with Lord Castlereagh of Great Britain. Metternich was a “supreme realist” who viewed revolution as a “legal avenue” to violate natural law and order (Kissinger 1957, pg.11). He cited France as the facilitator of chaos in Europe and
himself as the one who could effectively reestablish continental control (Kissinger 1957, pg.10). Metternich perceived the failures of the French Revolution as proof that representative political systems could not function in Europe. Accordingly, he thwarted all attempts at liberal revolution within his own nation and neighboring states, with violence if necessary, because he believed the survival of the absolute monarchy was synonymous with the survival of Europe (Kissinger 1957, pg.9).

The notion of self-determination and national identity were arguably the most important ideas created by the French Revolution in the context of Austria, Prussia, and Russia. All three empires were ethnically diverse and, as the nineteenth century progressed, liberal revolutionaries justified their cause on the basis of national identity and self-determination. Ethnic conflict in Austria is traditionally analyzed in the context of nationalistic tensions proceeding World War I; however, the subsequent analysis will prove that national identity posed challenges for the Austrian Empire as early as 1813, and the threat of domestic nationalism was one motivating principle behind the formation of the Concert of Europe.

The Illyrian movement in modern Croatia was one of the first progressive campaigns founded upon national identity (Haas 1963, pg.15). In 1813, the Illyrian territories were transferred from Napoleon to the Austrian Empire as part of a treaty agreement. It was in that moment that Illyrian nationalism began to flourish and the territories refused to peacefully reintegrate into the Austrian Empire without “significant changes in political representation” (Haas 1963, pg.16). While the Illyrian movement did not result in a full revolt until 1848, throughout the first half of the 18th century the Illyrian people constructed a fortified national movement. The Illyrian Croats wanted to have their own autonomous government upon being transferred from French to Austrian rule; moreover, they wanted to “benefit from the considerate
and mild rule of the fatherly monarchy,” meaning they wanted to reap the economic and military benefits of the Austrian empire but hoped to establish their own political sphere (Haas 1963, pg.21). Emperor Franz Josef, at the urging of Metternich, refused the Illyrian proposal, prompting Illyrian territories to refuse to pay taxes to Vienna. The national spirit of the Illyrians did not come to fruition until 1848, but at the micro-foundational level individuals began to feel part of a Croatian nation and increasingly separated from the Austrian Empire as the decades progressed. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, Croatian Illyrians initiated an uncontrollable appeal of the “Illyrian nation” that persisted until World War I, but the genesis of this movement was in the era of the Concert of Europe (Haas 1963, pg.28).

The nationalism of the Illyrians pressured the Austrian government in the same way German nationalists pushed for representative reform in Prussia, and Polish nationalism forced the hand of Russia to grant semi-political autonomy with its own military and constitution. The analysis of nationalism depicts the factual threat that liberal enlightenment ideology posed to the Great Powers and explains why the Great Powers fundamentally altered their political behavior at the Concert of Europe. The concept of “ideological triggers” in alliance behavior is vital to the understanding of why domestic considerations were consequential to both the formation and durability of the Concert of Europe. John Owen best describes how rival ideology and alliance behavior is intertwined:

An ideological contest is a struggle between at least two opposing plans for organizing social life within a state. Whether the underlying difference be in scope or content, when on transnational ideology is gaining at the expense of another… alliances will correspond to domestic regime type (Owen 2005, pg.79).
During the Concert of Europe, the two opposing ideologies were monarchism and republicanism, in which monarchism and the very existence of European empires was threatened by liberal thought. Owen reiterates an important observation that is relevant to the Concert of Europe in stating that rival ideologies threaten governments and rulers rather than the state, meaning that the state may be preserved if the opposing ideology “wins” the ideological battle (Owen 2005, pg.80). This point conveys that the existing monarchs in Europe perceived their personal existence to be in jeopardy, not the existence of their state. The Great Power empires choose to align together not to achieve regional peace, but to ensure their ideological interpretation of government survived the challenge of liberalism. The struggle between two competing ideologies that determine domestic politics, and its proven impact on international alliance behavior, substantiates the claim that domestic political motivations influenced the Great Power empires to form the Concert of Europe.

The British Empire and the Concert of Europe

The role of Great Britain in the Concert of Europe was unique insofar as the British were uninterested in the prospect of liberal thought reaching the British Isles, they did not fear popular enlightenment ideology or national tendencies in the same way as the Continental Empires because the British gradually began to adapt to enlightenment thought throughout the eighteenth century (Carrie 1968, pg.4). Great Britain also had protection from enlightened revolutionaries due to its geography and unique distance from the domestic political pressures of Central Europe (Carrie 1968, pg.4). The only instance in which Great Britain would be concerned about domestic regime change in a foreign county was if the change posed a threat abroad to its Isles or colonies; had Britain perceived liberal thought to jeopardize the British Empire it would have joined the Concert for identical reasons as the continental powers (Carrie 1968, pg.4).
primary motivation for Great Britain to join the Concert of Europe was centered on security concerns. Great Britain equated its national interests to containing France and installing a balance of power in Europe that would lead to peace on the continent (Carrie 1968, pg.4; Kissinger 1957, pg.30; Castlereagh 1848, pg.355). In this way the British rationale behind the Concert of Europe corresponds to the traditional narrative of Kissinger and Elrod, the notion that the Concert of Europe was formed to create an international balance of power with a stable and peaceful climate. However, the very fact that Great Britain was using diplomacy to attain peace could speak to the domestic nature of British politics. While Great Britain was not a democracy when the concert was formed, it was a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system, meaning that politics in Britain were plural with competing bureaucratic ideas regarding how the empire should be governed. Scholarship has proven that there are higher audience costs for engaging in warfare where representative governments are concerned, and the fact that Great Britain was interested in establishing peace in continental Europe could be due to the empire’s increasingly representative government.

The majority of scholarship regarding the Concert of Europe points out the discrepancy between the continental empires and Great Britain. The motivation for forming the Concert can be understood as two nodes of thought, each perceiving the problem of the French Revolution differently. Kissinger best describes this difference as follows:

…To the Continental nations it was a war not only for independence, but for their independence. For Austria it was war for the survival of a social order; for Great Britain it was a war for a Europe in which universal domination would be impossible and France could be contained (Kissinger 1957, pg.33).
While it is clear that Metternich created the Concert of Europe to fight a war he perceived as a liberal revolution threatening the monarchy, Great Britain was concerned with creating a strong Central Europe that could absorb any offensive blows from France, thus ensuring Great Britain would only be forced to intervene in extreme cases (Kissinger 1957, pg.37). This provides further support that Great Britain was attempting to avoid continental wars, arguably to cater to its domestic audience that was uninterested in participating in wars on the continent. To strengthen the core of Continental Europe, the British entered into the Concert of Europe of provide the organization with legitimacy and military weight, because Great Britain was the global hegemonic power and had a national security incentive to do so.

The Concert of Europe can be understood as an immensely successful experiment with collective security as it contributed to over forty years of relative peace in Europe. Although the Concert of Europe eventually disintegrated during the Crimean War, it is considered the most successful experiment with collective security and regional alliances because it created four decades of peace in Europe, an unprecedented reality for the continent. While the Great Powers were and are perceived to adhere to realism in the realm of international relations, their ability to apply their agreement in Vienna to a broad range of regional crises is indicative of emerging liberal tendencies (Lemmons 2012, pg.2). The overall success of the Concert of Europe can be attributed to the self-restraint of the Great Powers in military and political pursuits as a means to secure their own domestic survival; ironically, it produced peace as a secondary effect. Another reason for the success for the Concert of Europe was the relatively equal size the each power’s military and political capabilities. Each member of the Concert of Europe was a Great Power, and in accordance with the research of Bearce, the relative power parity of the Concert of Europe
led to the success of the alliance (Bearce 2006, pg.3). This nuanced point will become increasingly relevant in Chapter III.
Chapter III: The Middle Eastern Experiment with Collective Security

As defined by Mark Zacher, collective security agreements are established and invoked to “prevent and control regional violence” (Zacher 1968, pg.5). In the previous case study it was clear that the European powers were thwarting regional violence though increased cooperation to ensure the political status quo was unthreatened by liberal ideology. The goals of the Arab League were similar insofar as the members had the stated collective goal to protect themselves from conflict and domination; however, as this chapter will show, the Arab states often had divergent goals that were founded in the desire to undermine one another. The original six nations of the Arab League—the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom of Iraq, Egypt, Transjordan, Lebanon, and Syria—met in Cairo in March of 1945 to sign the Arab League Pact. The language of the original document indicates that the pact was both a nonaggression and defensive treaty, meaning in essence that the signers of the treaty vowed to exercise the same regional restraint in the Middle East as the members of the Concert of Europe did one hundred years earlier (Leeds 2000, ref. 3015). The previous analysis of the Concert of Europe serves as an example of how the intersection of domestic politics and regional alliances can lead to increased peace. The Arab League, alternatively, represents how domestic politics can interact with regional alliances and not only fail to produce peace, but escalate regional violence. The ensuing analysis will examine the historical context for the Arab League, discuss the motivations on behalf of the Arab states to form a defensive alliance, and investigate the effectiveness of the Arab experiment with collective security.
Identity in the Middle East

A brief discussion of identity in the Middle East that emerged in the interwar period is beneficial to understanding the challenges that the Arab League faced. The complexities of identity in the Middle East tested, and continue to test, the ability of the states in the region to avoid conflict with one another, and the deep inter-Arab conflict often paralyzes the Arab states from being able to prevent conflict with foreign forces, particularly Israel. There are many axes to Arab identity that have had varying degrees of relevance throughout history, and added to that is a complex and multi-layered Islamic identity across the Middle East. In the 21st century, for example, the Sunni-Shia dyad has captivated the attention of both the Middle East and the world and is cited as one of the leading sources of regional, inter-Arab conflict. However, throughout the interwar period and the formative years of the Arab League, the central point of enmity between the Arab states was the decision between Arab unity and Arab separatism. This debate was fundamentally shaped by events in Europe and the role of the Ottoman Empire in World War I. The Ottoman Empire fought in World War I against the Triple Entente (Great Britain, France, and later the United States) having allied with the Germans; this decision would have vast repercussions for the social and political identity of the Middle East because it led to the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire.

Until 1923 the majority of the Middle East, meaning the majority of Arabs and Muslims, existed under the rule of a single caliph in the Ottoman Empire. In 1914 the largest cities in the Arab world, such as Mecca and Medina, Damascus, Bagdad, and Jerusalem, remained under common leadership. The Ottoman Empire provided individuals in the Middle East with a sense of broader belonging to a regional order, represented by the
sultan and the caliphate, but also by social and governmental institutions (Cleveland Bunton 2013, pg. 157). The Ottoman Empire, although it had immense social and political issues, represented a common entity that all in the Middle East could stand behind for protection against perceived danger from European imperialism (Cleveland Bunton 2013, pg. 157). The end of the Ottoman Empire was met with British and French occupation and partition of former Ottoman lands as the Middle East was organized into a Westphalian nation-state system that was of foreign design and forced the Middle East to abandon its previous common identity.

It was in this context that a debate began, and lasted throughout the interwar period, about how the Middle East ought to be organized politically. Should there be one Arab state under the rule of one leader? Or should the Middle East remain organized as an array of sovereign states? Arguably, based on historical examples, many Arab leaders wanted the Middle East to be unified if they could rule the region, but if Arab unity threatened their own power they were staunchly, often violently, opposed. The closest the Middle East came to returning to a semblance of Arab unity was in 1943 when, with British support, Iraq proposed the Federation of the Fertile Crescent- Iraq, Syrian, Lebanon, Palestine, and Transjordan. Naturally, the head of this state would have been King Faysal of Iraq. This demonstrates that the Arab Leaders used the notion of Arab unity when they could wield it to increase their own territory, thereby increasing their own political and territorial sovereignty in the context of the nation-state system. In this way Arab unity threatened the power of those leaders who were not presiding over the unification, because unification signified giving up power to the unifier. This concept will be explored further in this chapter with the reemergence of Pan-Arabism in Egypt.
The previous analysis depicts an emerging nation-state system in the Middle East that led to a division in the region on the basis of unification. The pattern of Middle Eastern politics from the late 1930s throughout the mid-1950s was one of powerful leaders calling for a return to Arab unification, and the rest of the Middle Eastern leaders allying against the unifier to protect their own power. This demonstrates that calls for unification from one leader were perceived as threats to the territorial sovereignty of other Middle Eastern nations, meaning that individual state sovereignty, as opposed to Arab unity, influenced inter-Arab competition and the personal ambition of Arab leaders (Barnett 1995, pg. 481).

Motivations to form the League of Arab States

By 1945 the political structure of the Middle East was emerging in its modern form. The majority of the sovereign nations in the Middle East gained their independence throughout the 1930s and early 1940s from British and French imperialism. Middle Eastern nation-states adapted to an international system that was preoccupied with global economic turmoil and advancing political tensions in Europe. By the mid to late-twentieth century, the notion of Arab Unity within the Middle East seemed irredeemable as the established nation-states formed bitter rivalries and pursued regional hegemony (Zacher 1968, pg.161). As previously mentioned, the Kingdom of Iraq under King Faysal attempted to create the Federation of Fertile Crescent States in 1943, and although it never came to fruition, it was clear that Faysal would have been the leader of the Federation. An idea that began in 1943 persisted through the early years of the Arab League and revealed that a treaty document mandating nonaggression and consolation among all signers could not remedy the inter-Arab conflict and hegemonic tendencies in the Middle East. This initial conflict was characterized by a dynastic rivalry between Hashemite Iraq (the proposed
ruler of the Federation) and the remaining nations in the Middle East who perceived Faysal’s appeal of Arab unity to be a tactic to increase the political power of Iraq and the Hashemite clan (Zacher 1968, pg.172). Zacher notes that Egypt and Saudi Arabia, the non-Hashemite states, were opposed to any shift in the regional status quo because it would tip the regional balance of power in Faysal’s favor, allowing him to use his political weight to influence regional politics within the borders of other Arab states. This rivalry between the Hashemite and non-Hashemite nations emerged in the late 1930s and was the focal point of inter-Arab politics for the first decade of the Arab League (Zacher 1968, pg.174).

It was in this context of extensive internal political and ideological divisions that the Arab League was founded. The central question is, if there was in fact momentous conflict among the Arab states, why did they enter into a nonaggression and consultation pact in 1945? As previously explained, the original six members of the Arab League were a coalition of young nations with a range of different political and social agendas and few common goals. As the 1930s progressed, it became clear that Arab unity was obsolete because, as the example with King Faysal demonstrated, any attempt to unify was met with an opposing coalition; this resulted in no one leader being able to mount enough power to overcome the opposition and impose unification. By the signing of the Arab League Pact, it seemed that every Arab leader was using the same rational: first, unification was desirable to every leader in the Middle East if it was they who governed the territory, and second, forgoing Arab unity was the only avenue by which each individual Arab leader could maintain their hold on power. The Arab League Pact demonstrates how the Arab leaders reconciled Arab Unity within the Westphalian sovereign state system they inherited; their ultimate reaction was to form the Arab League as an alternative to Arab Unity that could
appeal to every Arab state’s domestic desires to return to a universal Arab order after the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, yet simultaneously uphold state sovereignty (Zacher 1968, pg. 166; Barnett 1995, pg. 494; Barnett 1993, pg. 271).

From the view of the Arab nations, the driving force that necessitated a regional alliance in the Middle East was the desire to establish a norm of national sovereignty to replace the popular demand by some strong regional actors for Arab unity, implying the Arab states were motivated to form the Arab League in order to protect themselves from one another (Zacher 1968, pg. 165). Some major themes that support this argument in the original document include the reiteration of the state’s right to uphold its own security and the lack of a sound enforcement mechanism for the Arab League’s decisions; these are clearly aspects that allude to the Arab leaders’ preoccupation with protecting their sovereignty from regional influence (Zacher 1968, pg.164). These tendencies are consistent with existing research. According to Etel Soligen, when there is a high degree of uncertainty surrounding the possible effect of a regional alliance or institution on the power distribution, nations tend to agree to treaty language that is vague and non-binding (Soligen 2008, pg.267). The above criterion demonstrates that the Arab League was created to ensure the longevity of the political status quo in the Middle East. This goal of the Arab League was domestic in nature because it reveals that Middle Eastern nations did not want to be held accountable to any foreign authority, including those in the Middle East, regarding their domestic political practices; in other words, Middle Eastern leaders wanted to protect the decisions of their domestic regime without regional backlash.

When compared to the Concert of Europe, the goal of Arab League was the same: to uphold the existing political status quo in a defined region. However, the enforcement
mechanism in the Middle East lacked the ability to regulate conflict precisely because the member states of the league were devoted to upholding national sovereignty, resulting from their fears of foreign intervention in their domestic affairs. It is arguable that the obsession on behalf of the Arab leaders with institutional rules surrounding sovereignty is at the core of the Arab League’s failure (Barnett 1999, pg.700).

In the years prior to the formation of the Concert of Europe, the Great Powers practiced radical self-interest in Europe. However, the shared exposure to the danger of liberalism forced the Great Powers to form a collective security agreement and exercise self-restraint to reach their collective goal of political survival. Similarly, the Arab states were presented with a collective problem in late 1948 that transcended their own regional disputes and provided an opportunity for enhanced solidarity.

In the years after the initial Arab League Pact was signed the Arab states were decisively defeated at the hands of Israel, a force supported by western power, thus representing a foreign presence in the Middle East (Shlaim 1997, pg. 99). This defeat prompted the members of the Arab League to sign a new agreement within the existing Arab League Pact, the Arab Collective Security Pact of 1950 (Zacher 1968, pg. 167). The principle force driving the Arab states to align together in a defensive alliance was the shared fear and contempt for foreign intervention in regional politics, specifically in the context of the formation of Israel (Zacher 1968, pg.161).

The Israeli conflict was similar to the Napoleonic Wars of the nineteenth century insofar as the conflict had a broad impact on both international security and domestic politics. In the context of the domestic politics and alliance behavior, it is not the Israeli conflict itself that is consequential to understand, but instead the Arab-Israeli conflict’s
effect on Arab nationalism and the intersection of Arab nationalism with the Arab League. In this context, Arab nationalism is indicative of the desired goal of all citizens across the Middle East to defeat Israel. The struggle against Israel was not framed as Egyptians versus Israel, or Jordanians versus Israel, but Arabs versus Israel; this fact demonstrates that while the Arab leaders prioritized national sovereignty over Arab unity, individuals in the Middle East still held a common regional identity. Israel represented the enemy, just as Napoleon and liberalism did in Europe, and this rival force had the predictable effect of forcing the hegemony-seeking powers in the Middle East (Egypt, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia and their respective coalitions) to create a strong alliance system to deter the force that was threatening their state survival (Owen 2005, pg.73).

International relations theory predicts, and the analysis of the Concert of Europe demonstrates, that the alliance between the hegemonic powers in the Middle East should have produced an era of peace as nations increased self-restraint to thwart their common enemy out of personal self-interest. However, between 1948 and 1977 there were twenty-six wars, crises, and military interventions in the Middle East, meaning that the Arab League did not produce any semblance of “long peace” (Zacher 1968, pg.192). The reasons for this can be partially answered by assessing domestic aspirations for regional political power held by the Arab leaders. The subsequent analysis of Arab nationalism will demonstrate that domestic policy and nationalistic behavior rendered the Arab League ineffective at mitigating conflict.

*Nassar and The League of Arab States*

The domestic ambition and social policy of the varying members of the Arab League is one of the principal reasons that the alliance failed to lower violence in inter-Arab
relations. The nation that most vividly depicts domestic policy thwarting the durability of the Arab League was Egypt under the rule of Gamal Abd al-Nassar. The Egyptian case study demonstrates how domestic politics can harm regional alliance systems and increase the likelihood of conflict.

During the first fifteen years of the Arab League, two dominant internal coalitions formed with Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Syria traditionally allied with Egypt, while Jordan and Iraq (the Hashemite states) positioned themselves opposite to the majority coalition (Zacher 1968, pg.171). However, with the rise of Gamal Abd al-Nassar in Egypt, and his appeals to Arab nationalism and “revolution” across the Middle East to create one Arab state, the existing coalitions began to deteriorate. Nassar appealed to Arab nationalism by invoking rhetoric surrounding the 1948 Arab defeat by Israel, Palestinian liberation, and rejecting all foreign presence in the Middle East, particularly British control of the Suez Canal. Unlike many voices of leadership in the Arab world, Nassar’s rhetoric was strong and optimistic towards the collective Arab future. From his work, *The Philosophy of the Revolution*, it is clear that Nassar held adamant beliefs about the kinetic strength of the “Arab Nation”, meaning that he believed the Middle East could defeat imperialism and Israel though unifying (Nassar 1995). It is also clear that Nassar had vast personal and political ambitions, evidenced by an excerpt from his book: “.. this role[of savior] has at last settled down near the borders of our country and it is beckoning us to move.. since no one else is qualified” (Nassar 1955). Here it is clear that while Nassar had a real desire to unite the Middle East, he saw Egypt and himself as the leader of the unified Arab nation.

In July of 1956, Nassar nationalized the Suez Canal and immediately evoked a surge in Arab nationalism across the Middle East, which created vast popular support for him and
his ideology (Cleveland, Bunton 2013, pg.289-291). He was perceived to be a strong military leader who could successfully avenge the Arab loss to Israel ten years earlier and rid the Middle East of lingering aspects of foreign imperialism. Nassar manipulated the collective Arab anger and shame of the 1948 war to promote the idea of Arab unity, claiming that establishing collective strength was the only way to defeat the Middle East’s common enemies and regain credibility for the Arab world. However, as Nassar became more powerful he encouraged revolutionary tendencies and appealed to socialist ideology (Zacher 1968, pg. 177). This was the brand of behavior that the Arab leaders originally formed the Arab League to prevent. Nassar’s influence on domestic politics throughout other nations in the Middle East led the remaining Arab leaders to align against Nassar and Egypt. Nassar was not threatening to invade Saudi Arabia or Iraq; instead, he was evoking political ideas in populations outside Egypt that could threaten to upset the existing political status quo in the Middle East. The other nations in the Middle East perceived Nassar to be impeding on their state sovereignty because he was intentionally influencing domestic popular opinion within their borders (Cleveland, Bunton 2013, pg. 291). His revolutionary and socialist tendencies, paired with his rhetorical appeals to a return to Arab unity and his devotion to defeating Israel, led many citizens throughout the Middle East to aspire to be part of a new Arab state led by Nassar; this was a tangible threat to the power of the remaining Arab leaders (Cleveland, Bunton 2013, pg. 291).

As Nassar’s popularity in the Middle East rose among domestic populations, so did tensions among the members of the Arab League in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The remaining Arab leaders’ fears of revolt and domestic demands to join the new Pan-Arab state under Nassar materialized in the Kingdoms of Iraq, Jordan, and Syria (Cleveland,
Bunton 2013, pg. 301-309). Nassar was threatening the nation-state system in the Middle East, and by extension the political power of regional leaders. However, before conflict could materialize between the Arab states over the notion of Arab unity and Nassar encroaching on the domestic politics of other Middle Eastern states, a conflict with Israel occurred.

After nearly fifteen years as a radical social reformer, Nassar’s fervent appeals to Arab nationalism led to regional conflict between the Arab states and Israel. It is believed that Nassar was bluffing when he mobilized Egyptian forces in 1967 in the Sinai Peninsula and dismissed UN Peacekeepers, but after a decade of passionate rhetoric surrounding the liberation of Palestine and the defeat of Israel and the West, his mobilization- a strategic practice of brinksmanship- proved impossible control. In response to the Egyptian mobilization, the Israeli army executed a preemptive attack against grounded Egyptian forces, ending any hope of an Arab victory and bringing and abrupt end to the Six Day War (Cleveland, Bunton 2013, pg. 317).

Egypt’s loss of the Six Day War signified the end of the era of Nassar, destroyed the notion of Arab unity, and set a pessimistic tone for the future of the Arab-Israeli Conflict (Cleveland, Bunton 2013, pg. 320). Nassar represented the notion that the Middle East could be a strong, unitary entity that could compete and defend itself on the international stage like it had during the time of the Ottoman Empire. The end of the Six Day War represented Egypt’s and Nassar’s decline, and thus represented the end of Nassar’s threat to the remaining Arab leaders in the Middle East. If Nassar did not get involved in the Six Day War with Israel, there almost certainly would have been an inter-Arab conflict in which the remaining Arab leaders would have aligned against Nassar in some fashion to protect
their own national interests. However, because Nassar initiated his own downfall the Arab leaders were not forced to act against Egypt.

Egypt and Nassar’s grandiose appeals to Arab nationalism and radical ideology arguably resulted in the Six Day War, and this war delineates one of the key costs to regional alliances: the moral hazard problem. In 1950, each of the Arab nations signed the Arab Defensive Pact with the intent of standing together in the event of an offensive attack from Israel. When nations sign defensive agreements they risk an alliance member provoking a war they are obligated to fight. Moreover, they may be forced to concede territory in the event of defeat. Throughout the late-1950s, Nassar’s rhetoric was provocative and eventually did lead to an offensive Israeli attack that the signers of the Arab Defensive Pact of 1950 were obligated to respond to: this is the essence of the moral hazard problem and demonstrates the cost of alliances.

The preceding analysis delineates the negative effects of domestic politics on regional alliance systems and conflict mediation. Nassar's appeal to Arab nationalism prioritized his own political agenda over the collective goal of the Arab League, in essence undermining the Arab League’s ability to create peace by defying the foundation of the agreement. This case study serves as an example that is contrary to the outcome of the Concert of Europe, where shared domestic concerns were the driving force behind success and the pacifistic nature of the alliance.
Conclusion

International relations theory is often treated as a discipline entirely separate from domestic politics; however, this stark distinction limits the ability of international relations theory and scholarship. Helen Milner best articulates the consequences of this distinction:

The central paradigms of international relations theory have ignored a key aspect of international relations: domestic politics…To understand major issues in international politics, such as the likelihood of war and peace, sources of conflict, and the possibility of cooperation among states, IR theorists must bring a systematic analysis of domestic politics into the field (Milner 1998, pg.759).

This perspective is not to say that the traditional understanding of international relations removed from the context of domestic politics is inaccurate, but rather incomplete. To fully understand interactions in the international system, it is beneficial to look at the domestic politics within the state. This paper sought to introduce domestic politics into the study of regional alliances and collective security agreements. While traditional narratives surrounding regional alliance systems neglect to incorporate the impact of domestic politics, an analysis of the Concert of Europe and the Arab League reveals that domestic politics influence states’ motivations to form regional alliances and often determine the success and durability of those alliances.

In the case study of the Concert of Europe, the domestic politics of member states proved to be powerful enough to motivate the Great European Powers- Great Britain, Prussia, Russia, and Austria- to alter their international behavior. The common threat of liberalism, the rival ideology to absolute monarchism, forced the Great Powers to align with one another to maintain the survival of their empires and themselves. The common ideological threat of liberalism incited
a drastic deviation from the norm of regional politics in Europe, prompting leaders to exercise self-restraint and increase their communication in the realm of political and military affairs to maintain the domestic status quo in each of the counties. The Great Powers of Europe understood the power of the demonstration effect on their domestic populations in the aftermath of the French Revolution, so to ensure their own domestic survival they constructed a regional alliance treaty in which they agreed to align together to ensure the continued strength of monarchism in Europe. The formation, durability, and effectiveness of the Concert of Europe can all be explained by the domestic necessity of each regional leader to maintain rule of law in their respective empire.

Where domestic politics was the basis for success in the Concert of Europe, it was the source of failure for the Arab League, particularly prior to 1967. The member states of the league possessed the common enemy of Israel, however the competing domestic ideologies, goals, and concerns of each member-state made self-restraint impossible and conflict habitual. It was each member-state’s domestic policy of nationalism, security, and sovereignty, and each leader’s own political ambitions, which led to the failure of the Arab League to mitigate regional conflict. The case of Nassar demonstrated that domestic policy arguably increased regional conflict; this pattern can again be seen in the aggressive behavior from Iraq in the 1980-90s.

There are additional criteria that could explain the relative success of the Concert of Europe in comparison to the Arab League beyond domestic politics. The two case studies are purposefully representative of two cultural nodes in the international system. There has been recent scholarship devoted to the influence of Westphalian state-system on international politics, insinuating that the history of European politics has constantly progressed forward towards increased multilateral cooperation, therefore making Europe and the West relatively more
competent than their Eastern counterparts to engage in meaningful collective security agreements (Wendnt 1999). Turan Kayaoglu harshly criticized this view arguing that such scholarship facilitates and legitimizes a Eurocentric bias in international relations theory and implies that Eastern states must be socialized into the Westphalian system in order to be able to interact in a collaborative manner (Kayaoglu 2010, pg.194).

This debate is relevant because it reveals a broader question for further study regarding the impact of shared social history and culture on the effectiveness of regional alliance systems. The choice of the Concert of Europe and the Arab League is also notable because of the generational gap. The Concert of Europe operated in a different and arguably simpler time period than did the Arab League, and the effect of the century lapse between the two agreements could have affected the stability and effectiveness of the latter. David Small and Melvin Singer found that in the 20th century regional alliance systems were more associated with conflict than peace, and while it is impossible to know for certain what the causal variable is in creating the pattern, it could be that the Arab League suffered from a generational effect regarding the ability of alliance systems to mitigate conflict. In addition to Singer and Small, there is scholarship contending that there will soon be an “end to regional security alliances” as the institution has proven to be ineffective at creating peace, eliminating regional alliances from the diplomatic playbook (Menon 2003, pg.2).

While time and shared cultural history present compelling arguments that require further research, the argument for the role of domestic politics of the effectiveness of regional organizations is proven by the case study analysis of the Concert of Europe and the Arab League. A wide range of domestic factors such as shared ideology against a common enemy, nationalism,
and the individual ambition of the national leader can contribute to the formation of regional alliances and influence their durability and success.


