

THE NEGLECTED NARRATIVE: THE NEED FOR A NEW PARADIGM  
REGARDING U.S. FOREIGN POLICY AND IRAQ

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# THE NEGLECTED NARRATIVE: THE NEED FOR A NEW PARADIGM REGARDING U.S. FOREIGN POLICY AND IRAQ

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## ABSTRACT

Throughout the history of the United States, U.S. Foreign Policy has been guided by the dominant paradigm and narrative of the day. Both the paradigm and the resulting narratives begin as responses to internal and external events confronting the nation. However, over time, paradigms continue to exercise undue influence, even as events pass them by. This pattern of narrative development, promulgation, implementation, and eventual irrelevance has repeated itself many times over the course of U.S. history, as happened with George F. Kennan's policy of Containment, and Hans J. Morgenthau's Realpolitik. Likewise, U.S. foreign policy in Iraq has been driven by an outdated policy paradigm and accompanying narratives that have been in place for many years. This thesis will address the way the paradigm is structured and operates through Thomas J. Kuhn's priority of paradigms analysis, the full manifestation of and proliferation of the body of the paradigm, coupled with discourse analysis. This thesis will show the consequences resulting from the use of the outdated paradigms and the narratives that were the driving force behind U.S. Foreign Policy in Iraq.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of the United States, U.S. Foreign Policy has been guided by the dominant paradigm and narrative of the day. Both the paradigm and the resulting narratives begin as responses to internal and external events confronting the nation. However, over time, paradigms continue to exercise undue influence, even as events pass them by. This pattern of narrative development, promulgation, implementation, dominance, and eventual irrelevance has repeated itself many times over the course of U.S. history. The inability of the nation's foreign policy decision makers to either preemptively or concurrently adapt to changes in the internal and external environment is a crippling feature of the U.S. foreign policy apparatus.

For a large part of the past quarter century, a major component of our country's foreign policy has been a preoccupation with events in the Middle-East, and in particular, the country of Iraq. Our involvement in the affairs of Iraq has been major, to the extent that we have launched full-scale invasions of the country on two separate occasions, and have stationed U.S. troops on its soil for the better part of this century. Despite—or perhaps precisely because of—its central importance to U.S. foreign policy and successive administrations perception of our national interest, U.S. policy in Iraq exhibits all the characteristics of this pattern of policy being driven by outdated paradigms and accompanying narratives that were in place years prior to the events on the ground they were meant to address.

Nor is this process unique to the United States. As will be touched upon, other countries have exhibited identical behavior in their foreign policy, adhering to long past-their-prime paradigms and archaic narratives, which stifle intelligent policy making that reflect the realities on the ground. Though beyond the scope of this thesis, this paper will take the suggestive first steps towards deducing a general theory of foreign policy paradigm life spans and cycles, across nations and time. More specifically, we will explore the roles of paradigm and narrative development, promulgation, implementation, dominance, and eventual irrelevance in the shaping of U.S. foreign policy. In particular, we will focus on the negative consequences of allowing policy to be based on outdated and misguided understandings of target country and the world surrounding it. Policy makers who see events through the wrong set of glasses react to events in entirely inappropriate fashions. For policy to be successful, it must be based on rationale and non-emotional assessments of facts on the ground. Policies primarily based on other factors contain the seeds of their own demise, and are unlikely to produce results desired or well understood results by the policy makers in question.

The thesis of this paper is that U.S. foreign policy in Iraq has been based on an outdated paradigm and its corresponding narratives, and that these misguided understanding led to misguided policy, and ultimately unsuccessful and counter-productive implementation of U.S. foreign policy in Iraq, and also to concomitant damage to our national interests and international standing in many areas beyond Iraq. This paper will address these issues in the following fashion. First, I shall attempt to draw the broad outlines of a general theory of paradigm life cycles, demonstrating that paradigms often take on a life of their own and have undue influence on policymakers

well past the relevance of events which led to their construction and successful promulgation. Particular focus will be paid to the genesis period of paradigms and how they come into existence.

Next, I shall detail how during this period competing narratives combine with emerging paradigms in combinations that eventually lead to a single set of overarching principles which come to be understood as the “reality-at-hand.” The process by which certain narratives become privileged while others are discarded or left to wither away shall be explored in depth. Long-term variables such as national cultures, histories, and languages combine with short-term variables, such as recent internal and external shocks to established methods and processes of doing things, and work together to make certain narratives of understanding more successful than others. Privileged narratives help give birth to paradigms of wide acceptance, but paradigms, once entrenched, have the power to produce reinforcing narratives that help secure and prolong the paradigm’s existence and influence well beyond what would be expected based upon an objective rendering of the facts.

With the broad outlines of a general theory in hand, I will next lightly apply this theory across a number of historical examples, that transcend any one particular country or time period, to show how a paradigm’s influence and narratives’ power are not limited to a single series of events in U.S. history. As mentioned, it is beyond the scope of this paper to fully develop a true general theory of the paradigm life cycle and narrative development, but applying broad outlines in a cursory fashion lends credence to our ultimate aim, which is to apply the thesis of this paper to the specific example of U.S.

foreign policy in Iraq over the past quarter century, with particular focus on the previous ten years.

After having provided a cursory look at the role of paradigms and narratives in shaping foreign policy in a number of historical and international contexts, I shall then set about focusing on my primary case study: U.S. foreign policy in Iraq. Although primary focus will be on U.S. policy in Iraq over the past 10 years, we will also look back as far as the days just prior to the first Gulf War of 1990-1991. What paradigm was dominant at the time of the United States' decision to invade Iraq? Can we identify long-standing and powerful narratives that reinforced the role of the dominant paradigm as the tool for understanding events as they unfolded? Can we demonstrate a firm connection between this paradigm and these narratives and the construction and implementation of United States foreign policy towards Iraq at the time of our first invasion? Did the results of our foreign policy towards Iraq serve to undermine or further reinforce the dominance of the current paradigm? Did our foreign policy actions lead to the development of new narratives that acted to promote or attenuate the paradigms influence?

As we all know, the United States invaded Iraq for a second time, in 2003. During the intervening years of the invasions, the United States, the world at large, the international geopolitical landscape and the international political economy all changed a great deal. But what about the paradigm and narratives that served as the eyeglasses of U.S. policymakers when making decisions relating to our foreign policy in the Middle East and Iraq? Did either change to keep up with the changes in the world, and in the United States relationship to that world?

To answer this question, careful attention will be paid to examining the dominant paradigm in place when U.S. foreign policy was constructed and implemented at the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> U.S.-Iraq Gulf War. How much, if at all, did dominant paradigms and narratives change due to events in response to events that transpired during the intervening years, both in Iraq and in the United States? The second U.S.-Iraq Gulf War and its immediate aftermath shall be investigated in much greater depth than all other historical examples, and will be mined at the micro level for variables which influenced policy, policymakers, and the public's acceptance and lack thereof of U.S. actions in Iraq. The role of new actors, such as Blackwater, and the re-packaging of ancient policy rationales, such as *realpolitik*, will be explored in detail, to provide the fullest possible picture of the connections between paradigm and narrative dominance and policy construction, implementation and pre and post-event policy justifications. For policy justifications, I shall look at both those willingly provided for public consumption and those discussed privately amongst the highest-level policy makers.

Not surprisingly, at the conclusion of our case study, what stands out at both the micro and macro levels of analysis is the striking similarity and continuity between U.S. foreign policy towards Iraq, and the stubborn influence of paradigm and narrative influence is structuring the dialogue surrounding the internal and external decision-making processes. The great economist, John Maynard Keynes, is rumored to once have said: "When the facts change, I change my mind. What do you do sir?"<sup>(1)</sup><sup>(2)</sup> In the case

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<sup>1</sup> Paul A. Samuelson and William D. Nordhaus, *Economics*, 14<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1992), xiii.

<sup>2</sup> The actual quote is believed to have been: "When my information changes, I alter my conclusions. What do you do, sir?"

of U.S. foreign policy towards Iraq, facts changed, information changed, decision makers changed, but old paradigms remained stubbornly influential and the power of old narratives remarkably constant, as did the broad outlines of U.S. policy and goals toward Iraq.

Having investigated the paradigm life cycle and power of old narratives in depth, are there lessons to be learned for policy makers, theoreticians and/or the public at large? Is our analysis overtly deterministic, with no path forward for improvement on the decidedly negative state of affairs? Or can we, as Keynes suggest, change our minds when the facts change. There may be powerful forces which make paradigm life spans longer than they should perhaps be, but there are countervailing forces in plain view, that if embraced and understood, can lead to old paradigms and narratives gracefully walking off into the sunset or retiring at just the right age.

At the conclusion of my case study on Iraq, I will address these issues, and offer a set of prescriptions for recognizing when old paradigm influence is counter-productive, and how to fight against allowing policy to remain uncritically stagnant. I will also identify where we are today, in terms of how much U.S. policy has really changed towards Iraq and whether or not we are any closer to having a framework in place for U.S. decision makers to analyze events and our national interests in the Middle East at large, and Iraq in particular.

In Iraq, U.S. policy was the product of a “perfect storm”, where paradigm dominance combined with powerful privileged narratives to wreak havoc on logical and

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thoughtful policy dialogue that could have prevented the resultant devastation in both Iraq and in the United States' vested interests in the region. The impervious nature of the paradigm and its concomitant narratives severely and repeatedly hampered external actor attempts to moderate policy, to the extent that the United States repeatedly put its own interests and troops in harm's way. The retarded lesson drawing ability of the policy apparatus has led United States foreign policy towards Iraq and the Middle East at large into an abyss, which the way out of, post Arab spring, will require that the final death bell of the old paradigms and narratives be rung.

## CHAPTER 2

### TOWARDS A THEORY OF PARADIGM LIFE CYCLES

Although once an esoteric word, for use in only the most academically oriented of discussions, in today's world, the word "paradigm" has proliferated to the point of ubiquity. Paradigm is bandied about, freely and willfully, in conversations ranging on topics as diverse as advertising, theology, management, health care and finance. Paradigm even graces the name of business establishments as varied as wineries, mortuaries, audio equipment, and talent agencies, in most cases without tangible reference to meaningful precedents or antecedents. In fact, one could be forgiven for arguing that there as many uses of the word paradigm as there are meanings. Beyond its seemingly boundless use, the meaning of the word paradigm has been diluted and degraded to the point of uselessness.

In order for paradigms to be of use as an organizing and explanatory term in this study, it is necessary for us to recover meaning for the term, and express paradigms as a construct with clear form and substance, that when employed with precision, can offer great explanatory power. To begin this recovery process, we will first take a brief look at the historical use and development of the word over the ages, its modern "re-birth" set off by the work of Thomas Kuhn, and contemporary attempts to mold and apply the concept to present-day foreign policy.

It is generally accepted that the first known explorations of the term paradigm date back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century B.C., in the works of Plato and Aristotle.<sup>1</sup> At risk of oversimplification, in Plato's work, use of the word "*paradeigma*" coalesces around the broadly envisioned idea that meaningful judgments of phenomena are not based merely on logical inductive or deductive thinking, but on considering whether or not phenomena are parts of a class of being or action.<sup>2</sup> Years on, Aristotle narrows the definition some, by focusing on paradigms as "exemplars", or examples. That is, phenomena are considered to belong, or not belong, to classes of events, types, entities, etc.<sup>3</sup>

It should, perhaps, not be surprising that much of today's meaning attached to the word paradigm harks back all the way to the writings of Plato and Aristotle, including the seemingly fungible nature of its construction. In the broadest of terms, and to differing degrees, ancient meanings of paradigm allow for ways of understanding phenomena in terms of what we have encountered before.

In modern times, it can be said that the inheritors (or offspring) of Plato and Aristotle are Thomas Kuhn and Michel Foucault,--two giants of twentieth century thought who both wrote at length about paradigms. Of the two, Kuhn's work (if not thought) on paradigms preceded Foucault's, and is the more well systematically defined and applicable to our tasks at hand. In *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* Kuhn lays bare both a definition and theory of paradigms and the subtly suffocating influence a

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<sup>1</sup> Giorgio Agamben, "What is a Paradigm?" Lecture. European Graduate School. Leuk, Switzerland. August 15, 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Plato, *The Republic* (New York: Simon and Brown, 2012), 9.

<sup>3</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, ed. Jenny Bak (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2004).

dominant one can have on expansive thought.<sup>4</sup> For Kuhn, a paradigm “stands for the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on, shared by the members of a given community.”<sup>5</sup> A paradigm, once firmly entrenched, structures thought by pre-determining:

- what types of phenomena are worthy of attention
- what types of questions are worthy of asking, and how they may be structured
- how phenomena should be studied and with what tools, and
- how findings can be interpreted

Kuhn, of course was writing about scientific communities, but there is no *prima facie* reason to conclude that his insights could not be applicable to sets of practices and beliefs of non-scientific communities, such as the inner circle of policy makers charged with forming and implementing United States foreign policy towards Iraq and the Middle East.

In fact, shortly after re-introducing “paradigms” to the lexicon of modern academic dialogue, the use of the term spiraled out of control and came to be used in most every field of human endeavor. Kuhn decried the proliferation of the word, and more importantly, the use of the term in ways he did not intend. Not long after *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*’ publication, Kuhn admitted that he had lost control of the

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<sup>4</sup> Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

word, and wrote: “I see little chance of recapturing “paradigm” for its original use, the only one that it is philologically at all appropriate.”<sup>6</sup>

Our concern, however, is not philological, but practical. The concept of paradigm proved so attractive precisely due to its fungible nature. The concept itself, in its most basic form, would seem to be the perfect vehicle for descriptive and prescriptive analysis of an endless number of human phenomena. An area most ripe for its use is the concept of “Worldviews.”<sup>7</sup> Worldviews are conceived of as groupings of values, beliefs, and experiences that reinforce each other and affect how people perceive events and how they respond to their perceptions. Worldviews, as broadly conceived paradigms, provide tremendous explanatory power when applied to the United States foreign policy establishment—in particular, the policy apparatus as constructed by entering presidential administrations.

In seeking to understand the world around us, there are competing worldviews that policymakers, and societal groups at large, use as their lenses to view reality. Presidential administrations often employ or appoint like-minded individuals to the positions of most importance. Hence, the highest levels of policy makers operate under a paradigm that self-organizes and understands “reality.” From this perspective, it is easy to see how Kuhn’s definition and structure of what a paradigm is, and how it operates, is

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<sup>6</sup> Thomas S. Kuhn, “Second Thoughts on Paradigms,” in *Essential Tensions: Selected Studies in Scientific Tradition and Change* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1974), 293-319.

<sup>7</sup> Steven L. Lamy, *Worldviews in International Relations Theory* (New York: Kendall Hunt Publishing, 1995), 103.

quite useful in understanding how United States foreign policy has operated vis-à-vis Iraq and its larger Middle Eastern context.

U.S. foreign policy has remained stagnant with a predominant narrative ensconced. In the case of successive Bush administrations, strict allegiance to a paradigm of understanding did not allow for certain questions to be asked or certain types of evidence to be accepted, since they did not fit into the accepted discourse of the paradigm. In our case, the given community will not be scientific, but instead the foreign policy makers aligned with right-wing geopolitical groups in America. Whenever new evidence or ideas come into effect, and the ideas do not fit into the privileged discourse, then the information is discarded. This process is known in Kuhn's writings as an "anomaly." When anomalies accumulate and push against the current paradigm, the paradigm is thrown into "crisis". What is supposed to happen is that this new evidence/ideas should have been examined and explored to form a new narrative. In the case of the buildup to the Iraq war, this never happened (the weapons of mass destruction that were not found, the missing yellow cake uranium in Niger, etc.). These questions did not fit into the proscribed discourse, and thus were discarded out of hand. The geopolitical paradigm in favor thus remained the same, solidifying the crisis state described by Kuhn.<sup>8</sup>

Since they exist in a state of "crisis" policy discussions remain in a period of stagnation, which prevents a paradigm shift from occurring. Thus we find ourselves in the same old foreign policy narrative for the Middle East, even when the facts on the ground have changed. Without the paradigm shift/scientific revolution there can be no

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<sup>8</sup> Kuhn, *Scientific Revolutions*, 67.

progress, just manipulation of the evidence to fix the facts to agree with the paradigm in place.

Like Kuhn, the French philosopher Michel Foucault uses discourse analysis as a way of explaining paradigm preeminence. Discourse analysis implies that it is the discourse that must stay intact, so that the priority of the paradigm is not disturbed. The US foreign policy discourse in place, dating from the time of the cold war, has continued to strongly discourage people from asking questions and challenging prevailing notions. Though the world has changed since the cold war, the Middle East is still dealt with using the age old paradigm, which according to Foucault's thinking is anything but an accident. As Foucault states "The production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures, whose role it is to avert its powers and its dangers, to cope with chance events, and evade its ponderous awesome materiality. The most obvious and familiar of these is what is prohibited."<sup>9</sup> This is a discursive formation from Foucault that has all the hallmarks of Kuhn's scientific revolutions.

The invasion and occupation of Iraq is just one of the many consequences of a discourse or paradigm left unchallenged. Kuhn mentions the term "paradigm shift" when new ideas/evidence becomes available, but as Foucault states, if the idea or platform does not fit it is thrown out. There is a conscious choice to ignore or disregard new information or ideas that do not go along with the narrative, making it impossible or highly unlikely that the paradigm will shift,

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<sup>9</sup> Michel Foucault, *Archeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. by A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 215.

In science, when new information is introduced one must constantly re-assess and question the paradigm, As we can see, however, this did not happen in the buildup to the Iraq war, for this and other reasons which shall be investigated further later in this thesis. If more questions had been allowed and more examination occurred, along the likes of Kuhn's scientific method, the paradigm could have shifted and perhaps tragedy averted. The question remains: How do we get foreign policy to allow for questions and fact checking and ways of dealing with a changing Middle East? When the paradigm does not shift, the end result is what Foucault calls "discursive formation" or as Kuhn refers to it, "anomalies."

Anomalies occur when a paradigm is stretched to its limits. It is the abject failure of the current paradigm to take into account observed phenomena or new evidence or its accumulation. Anomalies represent the failure of the current paradigm that is operated by human error, or malfeasance, as opposed to letting the evidence itself bring you to a conclusion, wherever it may lead. Sadly, operatives who have everything to gain by not changing the paradigm in place, use this narrative with a vested interest. This is paradigm manipulation, or anomalies. In the buildup to the Iraq wars, many stories of dubious authenticity were put forth to go along with the narrative, whereas stories that went against the narrative were thrown out to pasture, therefore obviating the likelihood of a paradigm shift.

For Kuhn, there is a" prevailing belief that all hitherto-unexplained phenomena will, in due course, be accounted for in terms of this established framework. This is what we have seen after the invasion, occupation and pullout of Iraq. The information that was not let in before slowly leaked out and thus we are questioning the paradigm once again.

Anomalies are failures of the current paradigm to take into account observed phenomena/evidence accumulation.<sup>10</sup> This is what happened in Iraq. The accumulation of evidence and misdoings were dismissed.

No matter how great or numerous the anomalies that persist, Kuhn observes that the "practicing scientist will not lose faith in the established paradigm for as long as no credible alternative is available; to lose faith in the solubility of problems would in effect mean ceasing to be a scientist."<sup>11</sup> The same can and should be said regarding our foreign policy narrative for the Middle East. If evidence is ignored, malfeasance tolerated, and stories manipulated or fabricated, then all faith is lost in the policy, and in our leaders. Kuhn states "In any community there are some individuals who are bolder than most"<sup>12</sup>, and as Foucault would point out, these are the people who are "outside the discourse" and they would have to be bold enough to challenge the paradigm.<sup>13</sup> Scientists embarking on such a "crisis" are exploring alternatives to long-held obvious seeming assumptions. To get to the truth one must go outside the paradigm and explore the alternative theories or questions. Occasionally when this is done the person may be branded a troublemaker, traitor or unpatriotic. Thus, once again, the prevention of questioning the paradigm keeps the paradigm in place and prevents revolutionary science

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<sup>10</sup> Kuhn, *Scientific Revolutions*, 4-5.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Foucault, *Archeology of Knowledge*, 17.

from taking place, or what Foucault called creating a rival to the body of established thought.<sup>14</sup>

Opposing conceptual change is what a good scientist does until the evidence leads him/her to state there is something that does not fit, and this leads to the three phases of the Paradigm Shift:

- 1) Pre-Planning Phase: any particular theory, although the research being carried out can be scientific in nature.
- 2) Normal Science: when puzzles are solved within the context of the dominant paradigm.
- 3) Revolutionary Science: a phase in which the underlying assumptions of the field are reexamined and a new paradigm is established.

The third phase is where US foreign Policy for the Middle East needs to get to. Clearly this has not taken place, although there have been some glimmers of hope in the new Obama administration. United States foreign policy has not undergone a reevaluation of the narrative that has been in place since the Cold War.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER 3

### UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY BEFORE IRAQ

December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941. As odd as it may sound, in many respects, the story of U.S. foreign policy in Iraq can be said to begin with the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, and resultant drawing of the United States into World War II. For years prior to the Japanese attack, the United States reaction to the outside world vacillated between joyful and resigned isolationism. Other countries' problems were considered just that—other countries' problems. But with the direct attack on American soil, the United States began to see the outside world as more of a direct threat, not only to its territorial integrity, but indeed, to its way of life.

Massive human and physical capital were devoted to the U.S. war cause and potential external threats came to be treated every bit as seriously as internal ones. The old isolationist mindset that had prevailed amongst policymakers prior to World War II seemed to have disappeared as quickly and suddenly as the bombs that fell on Pearl Harbor. A new world view took possession of the nation, and foreign nation activity scrutinized closely, by policy makers and the general public at large, in terms of whether or not it represented a threat to American interests.

At the close of World War II, the whole idea of “who” are friends were began to undergo an equally dramatic shift, as policymakers came to see every nation—whether current friend or foe—as both potential enemy and friend. Within months after the conclusion of the war, the outlines of a radical reorganization of the U.S. foreign policy geopolitical landscape was underway. Sworn enemy populations, such as those of Japan

and Germany, were on their way to becoming staunch U.S. allies, and previously allied nations, such as the Soviet Union, lost political expediency and were to become arch enemies of America.

The dual shocks of the Japanese attack on American soil and Germany's seemingly dogged fixation with world domination re-altered the world views of most every American paying any attention to world affairs. Not only could the United States, as a nation, not retreat back to a comfortable isolationist view of the world, but the country was now primed to see the world as a source of external threats to American national interests and way of life. In fact, new phrases entered the lexicon of foreign policy discourse and their increasingly ubiquitous use reinforced their importance and acceptance: "National Interests," "World Domination," "the American Way of life," "Freedom", etc. Phrases such as these came to dominate discussions of foreign policy and guide decision makers in ways previously not seen. Whole methods of understanding from the pre-war years were replaced by new narratives and paradigms which emphasized threat identification, threat assessment, pre-emptive action and pro-active containment.

The results of seeing the world through the eyes of this new worldview were every bit as dramatic as the initial shocks which led to the downfall of the previous paradigm of understanding. Within short order, the United States would adopt and formalize an entire new set of global foreign policy guidelines, based upon the idea of "containment" of their adversaries (known as the Truman Doctrine), dedicate massive financial resources to the rebuilding of Europe via the "Marshall Plan," rationalize, rebuild and expand anew an entire National Security apparatus via "The National

Security Act of 1947”, which created the Department of Defense (through the merger of the Departments of War and Navy, and creation of the U.S. Air Force), the National Security Council, and the Central Intelligence Agency.

The coalescence of this policy paradigm is often traced to a now infamous telegram sent to the U.S. State Department by George F. Kennan, an American Foreign Service officer serving in Moscow. Writing under the pseudonym of “Mr. X”, Kennan spoke of the inherently aggressive nature of the Soviet Union and its leader Joseph Stalin’s foreign policy. As Kennan elegantly stated, “United States policy towards the Soviet Union must be that of a long term patient, but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies.”<sup>1</sup>

Although Kennan’s telegram had as its concern the perceived expansionistic tendencies of the Soviet Union, the influence of the rationale behind the idea of containment was relevant to the construction of U.S. foreign policy on a global scale. No area was safe from Soviet or Communist expansion, including areas of the Middle East and its periphery. Containment became a major pillar of the new evolving paradigm that would come to dominate United States foreign policy for decades upon decades forward. Policies towards nations in the Middle East whether in the Soviet sphere of influence or not, were constructed with an eye towards potential Soviet expansionism, and events in the area were interpreted through these new paradigm lenses, and the resultant new security framework.

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<sup>1</sup> George F. Kennan, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” *Foreign Affairs*, 25, no. 4, (July 1947): 575.

A major component of this new security framework was the need for the “free world” to maintain access to markets, and most importantly in the case of Iraq and the larger Middle East, natural resources. Fear of losing access to important markets and valuable natural resources, alongside viewing every domestic upheaval and soviet sponsored mischief, led to a deterministic and self-reinforcing view of the world by American policy makers. One of its most extreme forms was the so called Domino Theory, whereby neighboring nations could become infected with communism by the events transpiring in nearby countries.

Interestingly enough, Kennan never subscribed to the domino theory, nor did he approve of many of the policies used to contain the Soviet Union. But much like Thomas Kuhn lost control of his prescribed use of the word paradigm, Kennan’s suggested policy of containment conformed to its own expansionistic logic, and not that of its author. Kennan was an area specialist by training, and did not agree that the logic of containment, nor the policies constructed for its implementation, were global in nature. He viewed them as area specific, needing to be tailored to individual circumstances. The logic of containment as a policy organizing principle, however, contained the seeds for its own expansion and application globally, including in Iraq.

This is part of the “genesis period” I refer to in my introduction, how they came into existence. We must first examine this process, the competing narratives, and how they became entrenched. Kennan's plea for containment developed from the Truman doctrine in four months, before he even wrote the infamous "MR X" article. Truman had underlined U.S. general containment objectives when he described Soviet influence in Western Europe as expansion minded. Truman then ordered military and civilian

advisers to Greece and Turkey. It is here where we see one of the first examples of "the domino theory".

Truman's domino theory required the U.S. to draw geographic lines to limit Soviet peripheral expansion. The method for this was to envision a security net drawn over parts of Europe and other places—whereby geo-strategic centers of power and economic production were located. Iran, Turkey, and Greece were already in in step with the West, politically and economically. Looking back now, it can be said that U.S. policy makers probably thought for certain that if they did not fight against even a single nationalistic or communistic type of uprising or challenge, it would have created a power vacuum that the Soviets could use to their advantage. Truman must have looked at this imbalance as unstable at best, and saw that many countries were dependent upon one another for the development of mutual and regional security.

In terms of U.S. security framework, and for all the aforementioned reasons, these target countries had to have put it a pro-western conservative regime to preserve stability in the region. (This phrase of "stability in the region" will loom large for the Middle East years later). Besides the issue of stability, there was the issue of preserving the western alliance, which would deny the Soviets the chance to instigate Marxist revolts, even if that was what a majority of the citizenry seemingly wanted. This is a classic example of the Truman doctrine, because they believed that if Iran fell, then Turkey and Greece would follow and soon central Europe, which would lead to WWII with the Soviets. This domino theory was not only applied in the regions that I have mentioned, but also throughout the world. It was the impetus for wars in Korea, Vietnam and Latin America.

This was a huge departure from what Kennan's idea of containment of the Soviets had been, to one of which every revolt or problem in the third world was believed to be directed by Soviet shenanigans. However, not all cases of people rising up to fight for their own direction were Soviet sponsored. Rather, the U. S. seemed to have an intense disliking for popular uprisings when it got in the way with the needs of western capitalistic endeavors, like having access to the markets and materials of each country. This too we shall see later in the Middle East with the granddaddy of all materials, oil. As Roby Barret states: "Thus for 40 years, American administrations took this Truman model for western Europe and Japan, and used it as a baseline and for better or for worse attempted to construct a cold war policy paradigm for the developing world."<sup>2</sup>

Just as Kuhn challenged long standing linear notions of scientific progress, the same can be said of the foreign policy paradigm, as we leave containment and "Realpolitik" comes along to be added to the mix.

Hans J. Morgenthau was the major proponent for the Realpolitik approach to international political behavior, and thus has ended up being (along with containment) a seminal building block in US policy. Morgenthau's theory has several distinguishing features that do not (as Kuhn demonstrated) show a linear development of policy. The first and foremost feature is that diplomacy, or politics, is based on (not simply advantageous) from a position of power, rather than ideological nations or ethical considerations. Morgenthau states that a realist also believes that "Politics is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature. The operation of these laws is

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<sup>2</sup> Roby C. Barrett, *The Greater Middle East and the Cold War: US Foreign Policy Under Eisenhower and Kennedy* (London: L.B. Touris & Co, 2009), 314.

impervious to our preferences."<sup>3</sup> Further to this point Morgenthau wrote a jaw dropper of a statement when he was speaking of America's miscalculations during WWII. "There was a failure to understand the war as part of the historic continuum ...subject to historic laws, which are of the timeless essence of politics itself and for those who disregard, a nation must pay a heavy price."<sup>4</sup>

We will see this school of thought in action again in the Middle East. Central to Realpolitik is the adage that politics itself forms an autonomous field of behavior and inquiry. Just like Kuhn's theory of paradigm priorities and anomalies demonstrate human behavior variables, Morgenthau stands firm in his belief that politics is no different in this regard. In this way we see how Realpolitik was like any other discipline (e.g., theology, economics, etc) and it has its own methodologies and concepts. "The central idea is the concept of power."<sup>5</sup> This power is the be-all and the end-all for true Realpolitik. The nature, the pursuit, and the use of power is the foremost concern of politics itself. One might even venture to stretch this out a bit to refer to a saying from the 1970's American pop culture icon Marshall McLuhan, that is power is the goal, then the medium is the message.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau and Kenneth Thompson, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1993), ix.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, x.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>6</sup> Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), 7-22.

The struggle for power is exactly that, a struggle, and it is continuous and deemed a necessary part of life itself. Given this scenario, conflicts can only be endured or contained, not avoided. This is a very important point when looking at how events unfolded since Realpolitik came into fruition. This is in lock step with what Kuhn has written about the structure of the paradigm, and also thinkers such as French philosopher Michel Foucault's thoughts about the power of discourse. In all three cases it is the entrenchment of the discourse, the priority of the paradigm and the position of power, which have embedded themselves in U.S. Foreign Policy. This view of Realpolitik is concurrent with the conservative political philosophy, and is a very important point.

Morgenthau asserts that "when political actors must make decisions in a political environment of opposing interests and of conflict, they ought to strive for a balancing of interests and seek the ever precarious settlements of conflict rather than their elimination."<sup>7</sup>

Of course the progressive outlook is different than the conservative one mentioned above. The progressive premise—that advances in education, culture and technology help the prospects for peace and stability—is rejected by Morgenthau. He states, "Merely because science and technology know no national boundaries does not mean that the nations are becoming "One World" politically. In fact, politically they are less unified today than in earlier eras"<sup>8</sup> Where Morgenthau thinks his is a pragmatic

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<sup>7</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, *The Purpose of American Politics* (New York: Vintage Press, 1964), 296-297.

<sup>8</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, *Scientific Man versus Power Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946), 216-217.

approach to foreign policy, others could interpret it as a closed door approach, allowing for no natural occurrences or actions such as the hallmark of scientific discovery like Kuhn's structure of the paradigm. Or, as Foucault would put it, if new occurrences or information arrives which does not fit into the prevailing discourse (i.e. paradigm) then it is thrown out because it is outside the true of that structure. A perfect example of this is when Morgenthau states: "Without the grand design, informed by historic experience and seeking what is politically possible, foreign policy is blind, it moves without knowing where it is going."<sup>9</sup>

This policy of Morgenthau's was brought into the Nixon administration by Henry Kissinger "<sup>10</sup> The foreign policy and actions during the Nixon administration, in particular opening up of dialog with communist China, are indicative of Realpolitik. Realpolitik as practiced in U.S. foreign policy was goal oriented and not bent on a set of ideological rules.

The bad part is since Realpolitik is centered towards the most practical means of keeping our nation secure, it can and has often led to a compromising of our nation's ideological principles (are failure to stand in practice against Apartheid in South Africa being a prime example). Also during the cold war, the U.S. many times supported despots in many regions of the world that were human rights violators. The reasons given were straight from Realpolitik and containment—the need to be pragmatic about policy and to maintain stability in the region.

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<sup>9</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, "The Perils of Empiricism," in, *The Restoration of American Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 116.

<sup>10</sup> Sholto Byrnes, "Time to Rethink Realpolitik, " *The New Statesman*, February 12, 2009.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE BIRTH OF IRAQ AND EARLY U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

As Roby Barrett states, “The policy of global containment of the Soviet Union, China, and the indigenous communist movements dominated U.S. foreign policy for more than forty years.”<sup>1</sup> With both containment and Realpolitik taking center stage for the U.S. for so many years, we will now move on to the Middle East, and the birth of Iraq, and early U.S. policy.

British relations in Iraq date back to the very beginning in 1920, as it was founded by Great Britain. Britain has had an interest in the area, most particularly the Persian Gulf and the oil fields, as these were the fields that supplied the Royal Navy. By the end of World War II, the British were in control of three provinces in Iraq: Baghdad, Basra, and Mosul. With the collapse of the Ottoman Empire colonial powers took over. Iraq became a British mandate carved out of three former Ottoman provinces. Because of this, Iraq was a very complex mix of ethnic and religious peoples. The major divisions were the existence of Kurds in the North and Shia and tribesmen in the South. These were the seeds sown right here for future unrest. Iraq remained a satellite of Britain for the next thirty years.

In 1961, after Kuwait gained independence from Britain, Iraq (who believed Kuwait to be part of Iraq) tried to take Kuwait by force. The United States supported Great Britain's administration of Iraq as a mandate, but wanted Iraq eventually to be independent, and not be a colony of Britain.

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<sup>1</sup> Barrett, *Greater Middle East*, 314.

"In 1960, the U.S. planned a coup, as it feared a communist threat—textbook containment policy. The concern was that the growing influence of the Iraqi communist party in the administration run by Qasim, would spread. Qasim was killed in the Ramadan revolution in 1963, by firing squad of the Ba'ath party. The Central Intelligence Agency (C.I.A.) was rumored to have sources within the group that wanted to overthrow Qasim. From a diplomatic point of view, having secret contacts with plotters implies at least unofficial complicity in the plot."<sup>2</sup> Qasim must have been aware of the plot as by then he was denouncing the U.S. in public. There exists some evidence that the U.S. was complicit in a memo from NSC staff member Robert Komer to President John F. Kennedy on the night of the coup, February 8, 1963. The last paragraph reads "We will make informal friendly noises as soon as we can find out whom to talk with, and ought to recognize as soon as were sure these guys are firmly in the saddle. CIA had excellent reports on the plotting and I doubt either they or the UK should claim much credit for it."<sup>3</sup>

Although, the earliest United States' involvement displayed the old containment policy regarding the so called spread of communism in the administration, it now seemed to have taken a turn to Realpolitik, a turn for a position of power. According to former C.I.A. Near East Division Chief, James Chritchfield "The CIA took interest in the Ba'ath party around 1961 but did not identify radical movement within the Ba'ath and was surprised by the power struggles. After al-Bakr and Vice-President Saddam Hussein

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<sup>2</sup> Harry Rositzke, *The C.I.A. Secret Operations: Espionage, Counterespionage and Covert Action* (Boulder: Readers Digest, 1972), 109-110.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

seized power in 1968, America developed not an outright hostility, but enormous reservations about the ability of the Ba'ath to constructively bring Iraq along"<sup>4</sup>

Even after this, Realpolitik policy had not been abandoned by the U.S., and was still in sight for the United States. Thus, after Hussein's 1972 trip to Moscow, the C.I.A. was rumored to have colluded with the Shah of Iran to finance and arm Kurdish rebels in the second Iraqi-Kurdish war. That house of cards was about to fall down as in 1979 Saddam Hussein instigated a coup against al-Bakr forcing him to resign, conducting a ruthless purge, and naming himself president. "From 1967-1984 Iraq and the U.S. had no diplomatic relations at all."<sup>5</sup>

So, from trying to use containment from the early days, to Realpolitik just before the break off of diplomatic relations the United States did not change its policies. They waited until the time was right to try again...with Realpolitik. "In the 1980's under the Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush administrations, the government authorized the sale of dual use chemicals and biological materials to Iraq. These included chemicals, which could be used in the manufacturing of pesticides and chemical weapons and live viruses like Anthrax and bubonic plague. A report of the U.S. senate's committee concluded that under successive presidential administrations these materials were sold right up until March of 1992."<sup>6</sup> Talk about a position of power, as Realpolitik rears its

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<sup>4</sup> James Chritchfield, interview, *Frontline*, PBS, 1995.

<sup>5</sup> Adam Tompkins, *The Constitution After Scott: Government Unwrapped* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 205.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Dobbs, "U.S. Had Key Role in Iraq Buildup," *The Washington Post*, December 30, 2002.

head again. The US did this as a way to boost U.S exports and gain political leverage over Hussein. It is here again we see no ideology, but rather pragmatic economic considerations and the position of power front and center.

More examples of Realpolitik can be seen in the Iran-Iraq war. Concern about the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran and Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan was probably the main factor in Iraq's rethinking of its relationship with the United States. In 1982, the US extended credits to Iraq for the purchase of American agricultural products, thus boosting domestic business endeavors on the home front. And here is the real beauty, Iraq was removed from the U.S. list of state sponsors of terror although former US Assistant Secretary of Defense Noel Koch later stated that "No one had any doubts about the Iraqi government's continued involvement in terrorism. The real reason was to help them succeed in the war against Iran."<sup>7</sup>

As Morgenthau's theory boasts, the pragmatic solution was the only game in town, and the United States supported Iraq regardless of the known evils, because of the Islamic revolution in Iran, where ironically the US had installed the Shah. Iraq (Saddam Hussein) experienced another failed coup in 1996. According to former intelligence officials interviewed by the New York Times, "The CIA directly supported a bomb and sabotage campaign between 1992-1995 in Iraq, and it was conducted by the national

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<sup>7</sup> Douglas A. Borer, "Inverse Engagement: Lessons from US-Iraq Relations, 1982-1990," *The U.S. Army Professional Writing Collection*, July 2003.

accord insurgents, led by Iyad Allawi. It was not successful."<sup>8</sup> These actions show early US involvement in Iraq.

In this chapter, I have described the early dealings with Iraq and all the shenanigans and/or examples of Realpolitik, which was a move in U.S. policy beyond containment. It was important to see these theories in action. As Roby Barrett points out, for all this time the cold war containment paradigm stayed, and then Realpolitik came in and never left. Kuhn talked about a paradigm shift, when new ideas or evidence became available but then they were not paid attention to or utilized, thus making them an "anomaly", with the paradigm staying stagnant, and keeping said paradigm in place. As I explained this also goes to Foucault's position on discourse analysis, in that no new ways were even attempted as it did not fit in with the discourse. What was needed in the early days of involvement in Iraq was a true recognition of the "anomalies" piling up—Kuhn's term for when a paradigm is stretched to its limits. The perfect storm and 9/11 will demonstrate this and this is what follows next.

I have shown the early involvement in Iraq, and we can see that most if not all that was done from a policy basis was Realpolitik. The US still was operating within the same paradigm, although all around them the game was changing. Like Kuhn states, when a paradigm encounters new information or a new situation it must adjust. But this was not done, so anomalies made their way in, and the privileged narrative remained intact, the discourse still firmly ensconced, until the eruption of the perfect storm.

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<sup>8</sup> Joel Brinkley, "Ex-CIA Aides Say Iraq Leader Helped Agency in 90'S Attacks," *New York Times*, June 9, 2004.

## CHAPTER 5

### GULF WAR I, IRAQ, AND THE USUAL SUSPECTS

Not many citizens in the United States were aware of who Saddam Hussein was, or for that matter, where Iraq was. The First Gulf War, which began on January 17, 1991, would soon change this outlook in a profound way. This war also set the stage for the current war in Afghanistan and America's broader battle against terrorism by Islamic militants, as it was the presence of "infidel" U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia during the 1990's that helped to radicalize Osama Bin Laden and other leaders of Al Qaeda, who vowed to target America at home and abroad. Bin Laden's main grievance was the presence of U.S. troops on Saudi Arabian soil.<sup>1</sup>

As strange as it may seem the road to Gulf War I featured the usual suspects in U.S. foreign policy: Containment and Realpolitik. What were the actual reasons for the U.S. to go to war then? Many arguments have been put forth, and by examining them it will be shown that all the reasons or lack thereof, will have the same old paradigm functioning in this new type of war.

In 1979, after a vicious eight year long war with Iran, which ended without a victory, Saddam Hussein set his sights on Kuwait, a small country on Iraq's southern border with huge oil reserves. Claiming Kuwait was actually part of Iraq, Hussein ordered Iraqi forces to invade in August of 1990. They occupied the country rather quickly and the United Nations immediately condemned the invasion and demanded that

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard Lewis, "License to Kill: Usama bin Ladin's [sic] Declaration of Jihad," *Foreign Affairs* 77, no. 6 (Nov/Dec 1998): 14-19.

Iraq withdraw from Kuwait. Soon after sanctions were imposed on Iraq to try and make them leave Kuwait.

No doubt, the administration of then President George H.W. Bush was caught somewhat off-guard. Looking at United States' interests there were no outright direct threats to the U.S. security. The U.S. had no treaty obligations to defend Kuwait. However, what lurked on the border gives the answer, namely the long standing key U.S. ally, Saudi Arabia—also the world's biggest oil producer. This would serve as a very strong example of Realpolitik, as President Bush had stated that the Iraqi aggression would not be tolerated, and that any threat to Saudi Arabia was too scary to even think about. This is the true goal oriented approach of Realpolitik, meaning to keep America's access to oil free and clear, although no direct threat was facing the United States. Containment policy might have fared better, and at first this is what the Joint Chiefs of Staff leader Colin Powell had suggested. However, the decision was made that for "stability in the region" (here we have that phrase again) the U.S. needed to act and not wait for sanctions and other measures.<sup>2</sup>

At first, the U.S. priority was to send enough troops and air power to defend Saudi Arabia against an Iraqi invasion, leaving undecided the issue of whether the United States should also try and liberate Kuwait. This is a straightforward attempt, so the Iraqi troops would not advance, hence not threaten Saudi Arabia. Soon after, the size of the troops ballooned eventually having enough U.S. forces to defend the whole country. The build-up was underway, and more troops were sent to wait it out to see if sanctions did not

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<sup>2</sup> Karen DeYoung, *Soldier: The Life of Colin Powell* (New York: Vintage, 2007).

work. If they didn't work, and the Iraqi's were still in Kuwait after a period of three months the U.S. would go to war.

The Bush administration used that time to build solid international support for the plan. The support of many countries in Europe, and others in the Middle East such as Egypt and Syria were all in agreement that Iraq needed to be forced out of Kuwait. The United Nations Security Council then voted to authorize all necessary means to liberate Kuwait. This made no difference to Iraq, as they rejected an ultimatum from President Bush to leave Kuwait. From that point on the U.S. called the war "Operation Desert Storm."<sup>3</sup>

Shortly after the U.S. ground invasion and bombing campaign, it was over before it really begun.<sup>4</sup> The U.N. mandate called only for the liberation of Kuwait, and there was no doubt little enthusiasm in Washington for pushing on to Baghdad, where the U.S. was liable to take serious casualties. The ghosts of Vietnam were most likely in the minds of policy makers. Not only that, but the Bush administration gauged a guess that their coalition would quickly dissolve if they had expanded the mission, and decided to actually oust Saddam Hussein. Hindsight being 20/20 many today have stated that the U.S. should have gone after Hussein, but one thing that was done was to have lasting consequences to this day, and that's the leaving behind of five thousand troops on Saudi Arabian soil. The presence of those troops, even with the support of the Saudi Arabian

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<sup>3</sup> Richard S. Lowry, *The Gulf War Chronicles: A Military History of the First War with Iraq* (Bloomington: Universe Star, 2003).

<sup>4</sup> Michael R. Gordon, "1991 Victory over Iraq was Swift, but Hardly Flawless," *New York Times*, 31 December 1991.

government, became a provocation for radical Muslims. Five years after this Osama Bin laden issued a declaration of war against the U.S. in which he cited the presence of U.S. troops in the Muslim holy land as his primary grievance. With one of the shortest wars in the history of the U.S. being brought to close, some still suggest that the United States did not finish the job by ridding Iraq of Saddam Hussein. But there is also the broader question of why the United States was using Realpolitik yet again to get involved in a war where there were clearly no threats to national security. By examining key arguments it will be shown that no matter what reasons were given they all hearken back to Realpolitik, and show that the first gulf war utilized Realpolitik to make it seem that it was a necessity for the United States to go to war.

The first and most obvious argument for the first Gulf war was simply oil. It was not the original reason alluded to at first by President Bush, but rather the naked aggression on the part of Iraq. No matter what was put forth in the daily briefings for the press before war time, oil still stands as the major reason. Although the need to prevent an Iraqi invasion was there, the Saudi's would not have asked for help from the United States unless they had good reason to believe that an attack was forthcoming. However, this threat could have been—and was—countered without war, and through deterrence, “containment”, and an economic embargo of Iraq. This was what then Chief of Staff Colin Powell argued, that operating under this type of arrangement, and having a limited and temporary ground presence might have stopped the Iraq government from further aggression, or at least would have given Saudi Arabia time to organize an all Arab

defense, instead of bringing American troops on its soil.<sup>5</sup> An embargo against oil exports would have deprived Baghdad of most of its income, in which case Iraq would not have been able to buy any new weapons systems, or even spare parts to fix its existing ones. Many more avenues could have been explored, but no new thinking regarding American foreign policy came about in such a dire time of need. Instead, the thinking was supply and demand based, meaning our dependence on foreign oil was paramount.

Besides oil, there were other arguments for the war, and they had to do with nuclear weapons (a theme that repeated itself years later in yet the same region). Some conservatives and neoconservatives such as Henry Kissinger, Frank Gaffney, Jr. and Richard Perle<sup>6</sup> claimed that smashing Iraq's military potential and destroying its capacity to develop nuclear weapons was the main objective of the United States in the Gulf. This view again is centered in Realpolitik theory.<sup>7</sup> At this time, the notion that Iraq was a near-term nuclear threat seemed to come about just when the containment type arrangement of economic sanctions were a serious consideration. There was a real possibility of giving sanctions a term of 12 to 18 months to work before war was to be considered. Again, the

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<sup>5</sup> Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack: The Definitive Account of the Decision to Invade Iraq* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004).

<sup>6</sup> David Frum and Richard Perle, *An End to Evil: How to Win the War on Terror* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2003).

<sup>7</sup> Bob Woodward, *The War Within: A Secret Whitehouse History, 2006 to 2008* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008).

only cards on the table policy wise were the usual suspects, with Realpolitik winning out over the containing of Iraq via long term sanctions.<sup>8</sup>

The oft-used term of "stability in the region" again appeared as another argument for the first Gulf war. To some people, America's quick military victory seemed like it was a brilliant move, getting the ghosts of Vietnam out of the minds of many. However, a much more sinister plot thickened as it set in motion much more turmoil; some of which was predicted but no one paid proper attention to. At first the United States' Realpolitik inclination to stay out of Iraq's civil war was prudent. But President Bush was trapped by his own moralistic new world order rhetoric and the administration wobbled into making an open-ended commitment to the Kurds. One cannot help to think that if the United States had followed a realistic policy (and not relied upon the same ole paradigm policy structure) by avoiding war, these tragic events certainly would not have occurred.

Policy makers in Washington relied on tired old narratives and paradigm stalwarts instead of doing any original thinking, or worse still not planning or thinking about the end game. There were reports in the January 14, 1991 edition of the Los Angeles Times by Robin Wright, that on the eve of the hostilities—when the decision to go to war had already been made, that the Bush administration finally set up a high level interagency study group to think about the Gulf crisis's end game.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Steve A. Yetiv, *Explaining Foreign Policy: U.S. Decision-Making in the Gulf Wars* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004).

<sup>9</sup> Robin Wright, "After Crisis, What's Next for Gulf?" *Los Angeles Times*, 14 January 1991.

To really cement the Realpolitik decision and make matters much worse the administration added to its complicity by actively trying to galvanize the Iraqi people into overthrowing Saddam Hussein. Every which way you look at it, Washington was culpable in its role. On February 15, 1991, President Bush himself came right out and encouraged Iraqi's to revolt.<sup>10</sup>

But, when the chickens came home to roost in Iraq, the administration engaged in the morally appalling spectacle of wringing its hands over Kurds and Shiites while at the same time washing its hands of any responsibility for their fate. This is one of the worst examples of Realpolitik in action; it was not only disingenuous, but thorough prevarication. This type of reliance on old paradigm stalwarts did make some people think that the United States can lay down the rules for behavior, but this type of attitude is born of hubris. The United States did not do well by trying to use this outdated policy stalwart from Hans Morgenthau in managing the process of political change in Iraq. It was the Kurds and the Shia (and countless other Iraqi's) who paid the price when American experiments in nation -building went awry. To try and rectify some of the failures the United States put forth again the argument for a "new world order."

The reasoning behind President Bush's statement regarding a "new world order" is probably the best example of Realpolitik from the first gulf war. After oil and nuclear proliferation arguments were put forth, a new world order is the truest match to Morgenthau's theory. Nothing about a new world order was new. It was one cog in the wheel of the argument for war. During the national debate leading up to the war, the Bush

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<sup>10</sup> Kenneth Katzman, "Iraq's Opposition Movements," *CRS Issue Brief*, March 26, 1998.

administration tried vainly to articulate a coherent, cogent and convincing rationale for risking war with Iraq.<sup>11</sup> Containment attempts at sanctions were off the table. This is a perfect fit with Kuhn's paradigm analysis. Containment did not fit into the paradigm, or rather the arguments that the administrations were putting forth. Thus other measures such as containment were "anomalies" and thrown out of the picture. This is the suffocating influence of the dominating paradigm, exhibiting what phenomena or arguments can be considered, or what Foucault would term as outside the true. By not giving sanctions the time to work, this anomaly pushed against the old paradigm still firmly ensconced since WWII. This threw the paradigm into "crisis", and the containment of Iraq by sanctions and other methods were abandoned thus preventing a new narrative from forming. This prevents new ways of looking at policy, and insures adherence to the paradigm.

The new world order was a way for Realpolitik to enter, and to look as if the United States had a new grand design for conflict, when in reality, it was put forth in the tradition on "American Exceptionalism" masking desire for money and power, true Realpolitik. This shows how the Bush administration's problems with Gulf policy lay not actually in the Gulf, but in America's foreign-policy elite's values and premises, which were encapsulated in the new world order concept. So if citizens were not inclined to buy the arguments for war, such as nuclear proliferation, naked aggression, or oil, new

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<sup>11</sup> Michael F. Cairo, *The Gulf: The Bush Presidencies and the Middle East* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2012).

world order was set up in such a way as to leave no doubt or alternative.<sup>12</sup> One set of arguments fit into the so called national interests' terms, and the other placed the Gulf crisis within the context of Washington's new-world order objectives. If the first set of reasons do not hold up when examined, it can be readily inferred that the new world order actually drove United States policy.

The way in which the Gulf war was fought, with modern warfare capabilities, does not mean it was modern policy for going to war.<sup>13</sup> United States foreign policy was still very much driven by Cold War thinking—the same vision of world order politics that has driven American policy since the end of World War II. Rather than weighing its tangible concerns in the gulf crisis, the United States was dragged into the Gulf by the deadweight of the cold war's intellectual baggage. The Bush administration's reaction to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait fits right into the old paradigm, and policy makers did not stop to ask whether the political, military and economic balance of forces were shifting dramatically, as it was evident the facts on the ground had changed, but our reaction to them had not.

The new world order was the Bush's administrations response to the intellectual crisis in United States foreign policy caused by the Cold War's demise. The paradigm remained, even though no new Cold War had come along. In order to achieve the Realpolitik of active power, global military and diplomatic engagement, conservatives

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<sup>12</sup> John R. Macarthur, *Second Front: Censorship and Propaganda in the Gulf War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

<sup>13</sup> Lloyd C. Gardner, *The Long Road to Baghdad: A History of American Foreign Policy from the 1970's to the Present* (New York: The New Press, 2008).

and neo-conservatives needed to come up with a substitute rationale for globalism.<sup>14</sup> An example of this is quite evident in a quote by then Defense Secretary Dick Cheney. Secretary Cheney told the Senate Budget Committee in February of 1990 "America should continue to anchor its strategy to the still valid doctrines of flexible response, forward defense, and security alliances...even the extraordinary events of 1989 do not mean that America should abandon this strategic foundation".<sup>15</sup> This quote shows clearly the privilege of that old narrative, and attempts to keep it in place.

To replace the obsolete mission of containing the Soviet Union, many policy makers have declared that the United States' role after the Cold-War is centered upon keeping "peace and stability" in the world, in this new and dangerous era. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait became the first test case for the administration to put in action the new-world order. The belief was that for this to work the United States must stop any aggression, and be the world's policemen, because the United States bears unique responsibilities.<sup>16</sup> This is straight out of the Cold War playbook, and it shows that there was indeed nothing new about the new world order. Its rhetoric and assumptions have a familiar ring, as this was the thinking that led the United States. into Vietnam. Although the Gulf war differed from Vietnam in terms in geo-politics and its topography and in the

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<sup>14</sup> Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2003).

<sup>15</sup> Noam Chomsky and Gilbert Achcar, *Perilous Power: The Middle East and United States Foreign Policy. Dialogues on Terror, Democracy, War and Justice* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2007).

<sup>16</sup> Ofira Seliktar, *The Politics of Intelligence and American Wars with Iraq* (Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan Books, 2008).

outcome, in one crucial aspect they were identical: both were fought on behalf of the vital issues of principle and naked aggression, associated with world order politics. In neither instance did the United States have concrete American national interests that would make war a necessity.

The reselling of Realpolitik, as a new world order assumes that its goals are attainable. Nothing could be further from the truth. War, aggression, and instability are not unusual events. Even after long periods of relative peace, they resurface with the same issues. Present day Arab spring uprisings show this to be true. Given this, it is evident that a new-world order has infinity built into its core, meaning there will never be a time when the United States will stop being the world's policemen. This ensures that the paradigm stays firmly ensconced, and that any new ideas for foreign policy will be dismissed as too "Pollyanna" or not tried and true. This shows the direct problem with relying on new-world order type of thinking, as it rests on moral and legal notions that supposedly have universal applicability, and they provide no criteria for determining which overseas conflicts affect vital and direct American interests, and which ones are of only a peripheral concern to the United States. The irony is that many who supported President Bush's policy stated that if the U.S. had not responded with determination to stop Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, it would mean they would have to fight later when Iraq had increased its strength from conquest. Well, as we shall see the United States did go in and fight later, even after stopping Saddam Hussein in Kuwait, because the policy is built in no matter what the outcome.

If the U.S. had refused to intervene, or even sharply limit its military involvement in the Persian Gulf, by meeting the Saudi's halfway, a good bet could be

waged that Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria and maybe Iran would have organized a defensive coalition against Iraq.<sup>17</sup> This did not fit into the paradigm, thus was not a viable option to policy makers.<sup>18</sup> Neither did the sanctions that were proposed by Colin Powell fit in. This shows how the very nature of a new-world order, that it is an elusive goal that puts a disproportionate burden on the United States when it comes to defending the interests it shares with other nations. Although there may be occasions when United States participation in multilateral efforts are justifiable, the United States should never cede to others its power to determine when U.S. military action abroad is called for.

Such thinking is often called unrealistic or teetering on the isolationist view. But the alternative to the kind of internationalism embodied in the new-world order view is not isolationism, rather just plain good old realism that puts direct national interests first. Simply put, the means and the ends of foreign policy must be proportionate, and the interests at stake have to be balanced against the consequences of pursuing them. The United States cannot afford to be the world's policemen righting all the worlds' wrongs. This is something that the policy establishment either failed to, or did not want to understand. The consequences of the First Gulf War were monumental in scope, and showed how United States foreign policy has been imbedded to outdated, faulty assumptions about the nature of international relations.

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<sup>17</sup> Rick Atkinson, *Crusade: The Untold Story of the Persian Gulf War* (Boston: Houghlin Mifflin Company, 1993).

<sup>18</sup> David Jablonsky, *Paradigm Lost? Transitions and the Search for A New World Order* (Carlsile Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 1993).

Gulf War I was not the Cold War's final installment. As we shall see United States policy continued to be guided by the usual suspects in the same paradigm, with even deadlier and long term consequences.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Jeffrey Record, *Wanting War: Why The Bush Administration Invaded Iraq* (Dulles, Virginia: Potomac Books, 2010).

## CHAPTER 6

### IRAQ 2003: THE PERFECT STORM

The Iraq invasion and occupation of 2003 provides a profound look into the disastrous consequences of the U.S. foreign policy paradigm, its adherence, operation, and manipulation. The policymaker's actions used the entrenched paradigm to implement a thorough re-engagement of U.S. power and the demonstration of its application in war. A rhetorical strategy was echoed in cultural discourse by President George W. Bush and his policy makers. Throwing together disparate opposition was a familiar cold war strategy that rears its ugly head once again in Iraq in 2003. Al Qaeda was conflated with the Taliban, terrorism and Islamism, and the infamous phrase of "the terrorist and the tyrants,"<sup>1</sup> led the U.S. into the worst foreign policy disaster this nation has even seen. It has brought forth a myriad of conflicts that could take decades (if not longer) to subdue. In the process all sorts of new forms of resistance were created. The breadth of U.S. objectives, which were fueled by (largely) neo-conservatives and their steadfast adherence to said paradigm, were reminiscent of aspects of the Cold War. Just as the cold war ended the traditional sense of victory, the ends to these conflicts would be elusive. There was no clear line to cross, or border to restore.

The same paradigm and faulty policy applications had loomed large in the decision not to give sanctions time to work in Gulf war one, and here was the United States again in 2003, filled with the illusion of using Iraq as a demonstration for the

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<sup>1</sup> George W. Bush, "Graduation Speech," West Point Academy, June 1, 2006. [www.whitehouse.gov/news/release/2002/06/print/20020601-3.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/release/2002/06/print/20020601-3.html) (accessed December 11, 2012).

promulgation of democracy in the Middle East and soon confronting the reality of the limits of its influence: military, moral and material. It is by examining key aspects and topics of this invasion and occupation that I will show how the use of discourse, narrative and paradigm adherence suffocated U.S. foreign policy, and have put Americans in danger of losing our democracy, for the sake of empirical undertakings which have little to do with our core values as a nation.

The tragedy of 9/11 should have been the “straw that broke the camel’s back” in terms of U.S. foreign policy. It should have functioned as a Kuhnian-like alteration in the paradigm. If we look at Kuhn's proposition, revolutionary change in knowledge occurs when a dominant paradigm is overthrown, and a new set of assumptions about the essence of reality comes to the front. Policy makers that were associated with the old paradigm and its uses are discredited, and their new intellectual rivals move in. However, this is not what took place. Rather, 9/11 was used to justify the invasion and occupation of Iraq, and in the process not only upholding the old paradigm, but cementing the Bernard Lewis<sup>2</sup> and Samuel Huntington "clash of civilizations" theory.<sup>3</sup> This provided the narratives to which the war was waged. Many exposés of the selling of the Iraq war such as "Hubris" by MSNBC's Rachel Maddow,<sup>4</sup> and the book by Michael Isikoff and

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<sup>2</sup> Bernard Lewis, “The Roots of Muslim Rage,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 1990.

<sup>3</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations,” *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1993), 22-49.

<sup>4</sup> Rachel Maddow, MSNBC Broadcast, 18 February 2013.

David Corn, of the same title "Hubris"<sup>5</sup> give an excellent detailed account on how the war was sold. My purpose here is to show the role of narrative and discourse functioning in a way not only to support the efforts to sell the war, but to cement and promulgate an age old policy paradigm that has outworn its use, and leaves our country unable to face the changing realities in geo-politics and policy. By dissecting the operational modes of the narrative, and selected topics, we can then see the steps of Kuhn's structure and how policy makers circumvented natural occurrences that should have taken place in the paradigm, thus stifling all other possible outcomes and prohibiting question from being asked.

The shared sense of humanity throughout the world, and the sympathy for the United States was easily and soon forgotten. That this shared feeling was so short lived is a sorrowful tale of profound proportions. The suffering of the days after 9/11 was quickly politicized. The appropriate political context of the attacks was ignored as 9/11 was reduced to a potent symbol and the basis for a neo-conservative vision of American power and order. After the twin towers fell few questioned "why" it happened, and if any speculations or inquiries were made, the label of "unpatriotic" was slapped upon them, and worse yet they would be accused of siding with the terrorists. There was no need to ask questions, rather retribution was the focus and this would soon be weaved into the "us-versus-them" narrative. This narrative was firmly in place well before the twin towers were hit.

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<sup>5</sup> Michael Isikoff and David Corn, *Hubris: The Inside Story of Spin, Scandal, and the Selling of the Iraq War* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2006).

One of the major proponents of Arab deficiency was Bernard Lewis. His coinage of the idea of "the clash of civilizations" was the backdrop from which policy makers in the White house ascribed to.<sup>6</sup> He was an informal advisor to the George W. Bush administration. In fact on the eve of the war Vice President Dick Cheney went on "Meet the Press" with Tim Russert and stated "I firmly believe along with men like Bernard Lewis, who is one of the great students in that part of the world, that strong, firm U.S. response to terror and to threats to the United States would go a long way , frankly, toward calming things in that part of the world."<sup>7</sup>

Lewis's influence in Washington D.C. reached its height in February 2004, when the Wall Street Journal ran a front page story about how Lewis's "diagnosis of the Muslim world's malaise",<sup>8</sup> and his call for a U.S. military invasion to seed democracy in the Mideast.

Mr. Lewis also addressed the U.S. Defense policy board eight days after the attack and brought a friend, Iraqi exile leader Ahmad Chalabi to "argue for a military takeover of Iraq to avert still-worse terrorism in the future, says Richard Perle who then headed the policy board.<sup>9</sup> Mr. Perle also stated that "Bernard Lewis has been the single most important intellectual influence countering the conventional wisdom in managing

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<sup>6</sup> Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage."

<sup>7</sup> Dick Cheney, Interview, *Meet the Press with Tim Russert*, 16 March 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Peter Waldman, *Wall Street Journal*, 3 February 2004.

<sup>9</sup> Philip Weiss, "Bernard Lewis Revises Bernard Lewis: Says He Opposed Invasion of Iraq!" *Mondoweiss: The War of Ideas in the Middle East*, 23 April 2012.

the conflict between radical Islam and the west."<sup>10</sup> Richard Perle was a close advisor to Secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld who also stated that "the idea that a big part of the problem is failed societies on the Arab side is very important."<sup>11</sup> This narrative of Arab deficiency was in place well before the decision to invade Iraq took place. It shows the suffocating discourse that was used to quash all who dared question.

These statements reveal the true power of narrative, and how it infiltrated and became the base of the policy. In Kuhn's structure a paradigm "stands for the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community."<sup>12</sup> These statements also bring forth the operational nature of the narrative that was being constructed, as Foucault states "in appearance speech may well be of little account but the prohibitions surrounding it soon reveal its link with desire and power."<sup>13</sup> The members of a given community here are the policy makers and administration officials, and their beliefs and adherence to statements by Lewis. They activated one of the most potent impulses in human society: "the definition of the other."<sup>14</sup> This clearly illustrates Foucault's point that it is the power of the institutions and not the truth of the discourse that these rules of exclusion are similar to. In this case they

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Pranav Shah, "Paradigms, Revolutions, and International Relations: Insights from Kuhn's Structure," *Security Research Review* (December 2010).

<sup>13</sup> Foucault, *Archeology of Knowledge*, 216.

<sup>14</sup> Thomas S. Asbridge, *First Crusade: A New History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 34.

are located in the social structure/institution of policy makers in the Bush administration. The fact that the anti-Islamic discourse develops out of this group prevents many from asking questions. The power of the discourse from these policy makers holds more weight and is not questioned. This is the archeological procedure that controls the paradigm and keeps it in place. It ensures its own materiality, remaining firmly "entrenched through the system of ritual and doctrine."<sup>15</sup>

The narrative of "the other" has many times provided U.S. foreign policy with purpose. The existence of this narrative has been vital to U.S. social cohesion and mobilization. It has been ensconced in the paradigm for quite a while. Edward Said writes "throughout their exchange through Europeans and their "others" that began systematically half a millennium ago, the one idea that has scarcely varied, is that there is an us and them, each quite settled clear and unassailably self-evident."<sup>16</sup> Dichotomies have been used throughout the U.S. policy paradigm and diplomatic efforts all the way from the Monroe Doctrine, creating conceptual dualities in the old and the new world and in the Truman Doctrine, stating the existence of two ways of life, and the need to make a choice at that time in history. George Kennan, head of Truman's policy planning staff understood the effects of such supposed challenges on U.S. society when he wrote in his now famous essay that they should welcome the challenge, because it would make the U.S. more cohesive.<sup>17</sup> The Cold war sustained that conceptual divide and enhanced the

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<sup>15</sup> David R. Shumway, *Michel Foucault* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989), 104.

<sup>16</sup> Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Chatto and Windus Books, 1993), xxviii.

<sup>17</sup> Kennan, *Sources of Soviet Conduct*.

ability to engage issues in terms of dualities, even though actualities were far more complex. Issues were much easier to frame and make understandable to the electorate if put in a dualistic complex: one or the other, good or bad, evil or God-given. The narrative stayed the course, and more additions popped up such as Francis Fukuyama's 'End of History' idea which gave grist for the mill that the United States had led the way to the terminus of ideological development, but as a source for motivation, it lacked the essential ingredient of the other.<sup>18</sup> Or to take it one step further, Samuel Huntington's idea of "clash of civilizations," which in part talked about the west versus the rest.<sup>19</sup>

This work was widely referred to before and after 9/11 by policy makers and the general public in search of understanding of what the atrocities meant. This was the only choice given to the public, clash of civilizations or bust. No questions as to why it happened were allowed, and this tenant from the paradigm is now used in a much more sinister way. The dualistic approach to foreign policy was enhanced through Presidential rhetoric, when George W. Bush explained, "either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists."<sup>20</sup> This not only obscured conditions and understanding, but it found multiple echoes throughout U.S. culture. As Edward Said states "the basic paradigm of West versus the rest (which is the Cold war opposition reformulated) remained untouched, and

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<sup>18</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Penguin Books, 1992).

<sup>19</sup> Huntington, "Clash of Civilizations."

<sup>20</sup> George W. Bush, "Presidential Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People," September 20, 2001, [www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html), 20september2001 (accessed December 4, 2012).

this is what has persisted, often insidiously and implicitly, in discussion since the terrible events of 9/11." <sup>21</sup>

Citizens of the United States and the rest of the world were not given many clues about the direction of George W. Bush's foreign policy prior to 9/11. Not much was said on foreign policy during his inauguration, but Bush did warn "the enemies of liberty" that Washington would "meet aggression and bad faith with resolve and strength." However, identification of these enemies remained vague. During his campaign Bush admitted not knowing who the enemy was. But he explained, "When I was coming up, with what was a dangerous world, we knew exactly who they were. It was us versus them, and it was clear who the "them" were. Today we are not so sure who the "they" are, but we are sure they're there."<sup>22</sup>

Of course after 9/11 the "them" became abundantly clear. The duality once again appeared and they had their enemy. However, the exact whereabouts of Osama bin Laden, America's primary enemy at that time, were immediately problematical. Within days a series of rhetorical strategies merged together disparate opponents. First, Bush made it clear that the United States would make no distinction between the terrorist and those who harbored them. It seemed as though Al-Qaeda and the Taliban were one and the same enemy. It is not clear if action against the Taliban would have taken place without 9/11, but the more important point was to have and use the ability of

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<sup>21</sup> Edward Said, "The Clash of Ignorance," in *After 9/11: Solutions for a Saner World*, ed. Don Hazen (San Francisco: Altnet, 2001), 84.

<sup>22</sup> "George Bush and the World," *New York Review of Books*, September 26, 2002, 84.

transforming a potentially open-ended, widespread campaign into something that had territorial definition. And we can at this moment just take a guess as where this will lead. What was a highly complex struggle against terrorism was reduced to a simplification of dualities, and more worrisome was that on 9/11 the White House principals began discussions on Iraq. Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, and his Deputy, Paul Wolfowitz, led the argument. Rumsfeld was given to quoting Eisenhower to the effect that, "if a problem cannot be solved, enlarge it".<sup>23</sup> It is probable that Secretary of State Colin Powell advised bush to keep the focus on Afghanistan, lest they lose the coalition partners. For the time being, Iraq was put aside during the war on Afghanistan. Progress there was slow, and this is just about the time when the conflation moved the so-called war on terrorism towards a greater focus on Iraq. Again, just as the Bush administration had problems with the Taliban prior to 9/11, some in the administration regarded Iraq as a longstanding issue. The 2002 State of the Union speech joined the problems with the now infamous rhetoric that identified the "axis of evil", comprised of Iraq, Iran and North Korea.<sup>24</sup> It is here where we see U.S. policy firmly engaged in using the same paradigm, with the narrative and operational mode of Realpolitik, as was evident in the National Security paper which presented an agenda filled with their intent and unilateralism, and the age old tenant of American Exceptionalism. Clearly, 9/11 helped the Bush administration frame the purpose and the direction of its foreign policy.

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<sup>23</sup> Eric Schmitt and Thom Shanker, "Administration Considers Broader, More Powerful Options for Potential Retaliation," *New York Times*, September 13, 2001.

<sup>24</sup> Maria Ryan, "Inventing the Axis of Evil: The Myth and Reality of Intelligence and Policy Making after 9/11, 49<sup>th</sup> *Parallel: An Interdisciplinary Journal of North American Studies*, 10:5, April 2003.

The direction of that foreign policy was the same as used before from the Cold war to Gulf war one, and here we have it again in the buildup to the invasion of Iraq. Realpolitik. Morgenthau's theory is based on politics "from a position of power," and the fact that "politics are governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature"<sup>25</sup>, and what could be a better representative of human nature than the duality of us versus them, or "the other." The use of this tactic is the objective part Morgenthau is talking about. It is the decision to use it (i.e. "the other") to drive the foreign policy. Further to this point is this statement by Morgenthau, "The operation of these laws is impervious to our preferences."<sup>26</sup> This is basically stating that the ends justify the means. Even if there were to be internal misgivings about the "clash of civilizations" theory, the duality would have to be implemented as it was said to be just "a part of the historic continuum" and that continuity was the greater goal of invading and occupying Iraq.<sup>27</sup>

Realpolitik demonstrates human behavior variables, and this relates to Kuhn's paradigm priorities. In the third plank of Kuhn's paradigm life cycles is "political and economic agenda's."<sup>28</sup> The neo-conservative agenda was crystal clear at this time, and anyone who went against it, was, as Foucault would say "outside the true, or the discourse."<sup>29</sup> In Kuhnian terms, it's called an anomaly—the failure of the current

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<sup>25</sup> Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, ix.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Thomas S. Kuhn, *Structure of Scientific*.

<sup>29</sup> Foucault, *Archeology of Knowledge*, 59-60.

paradigm to take into account observed phenomena. When this happens, evidence accumulates, then the paradigm would have to be examined or shifted, but this was prevented by policy makers who stifled all dissenting opinions, and put forth the use of "the other", as well as the duality of "you are either with us or with the terrorist."<sup>30</sup> Just as information about Arabs and their civilization was being manipulated, so too was the paradigm. For if the other opinions or evidence to the contrary was let in, then the paradigm would have to be examined, and a new truth would have to be revealed, thus thwarting the right wing agenda.

As we have seen, President Bush's rhetorical response to 9/11 started to frame the debate using Realpolitik, and in so doing further limited the range of discourse deemed appropriate in mainstream U.S. culture. The tactics of this old paradigm stalwart limited the scope of critical discussion, alternative explanations and understanding. The rhetoric of war, rather than criminality was privileged, thus the state was at war. And in so doing Bush claimed the terrorists were at war with American ideas. On September 14<sup>th</sup> Bush gave a speech at the National Cathedral, telling the nation (and the rest of the world) "our responsibility to history is already clear: to answer these attacks and rid the world of evil. War has been waged against us by stealth and deceit and murder. This nation is peaceful, but fierce when stirred to anger. This conflict was begun on the timing and terms of others. It will end in a way, and at an hour, of our choosing. And in every generation, the world has produced enemies of human freedom. They have attacked America, because

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<sup>30</sup> George W. Bush, "Presidential Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People," September 20, 2001.

we are freedom's home and defender. And the commitment of our fathers is now the calling of our time."<sup>31</sup>

This speech shows that there was little scope in the aftermath and its surrounding atmosphere to suggest that these attacks had roots in U.S. policy in the Middle East and U.S. attitudes towards Arabs and Muslims. Nothing ever would justify this heinous attack, but to throw a veil over the various causes, and wrap it all up in rhetorical Realpolitik does a severe injustice to our democracy. As if this were not enough, directly a week later after this speech, he spoke to the Joint Session of Congress on the 20th of September and stated "My fellow citizens, for the last nine days, the entire world has seen for itself the state of our union-and it is strong. Tonight we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. Our grief has turned to anger, and anger to resolution. Whether we bring our enemies to justice, or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done. On September 11<sup>th</sup> enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country...Americans are asking why do they hate us? They hate what we see right here in this chamber—a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms—our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other...Every nation in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorist."<sup>32</sup> This speech shows that some uncomfortable fundamental lessons from the

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<sup>31</sup> George W. Bush, "Presidential Remarks at National Day of Prayer and Remembrance," The National Cathedral, 14 September 2001. [www.whitehouse.gov/news/release/2001/09/20010914-21.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/release/2001/09/20010914-21.html) (accessed December 14, 2012).

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

U.S. foreign policy could not be admitted. The use of containment and Realpolitik in the Middle East masked U.S. support for the authoritarian regimes that it sustained in pursuit of regional stability, balance of power politics, and access to Middle eastern resources. These speeches show how President Bush's evocation of "the other" was used to create greater unity at home. Citizens are brought together with their contrast of a shared enemy. More problematical are the conflation that occurred with the use of this rhetoric, such as the merging of The Taliban and Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, because of the refusal to draw distinctions between the terrorist and those that harbored them. Iraq would be added to this, showing further duplicity. This particular rhetorical strategy tried to contain internal dissent, and in so doing shows exactly "the Discourse on Language"<sup>33</sup> that Foucault was writing about. Foucault's theory is in pitch perfect tune with the operational aspects of Bush's rhetoric. Foucault's theory is that discourse is not random, rather it is controlled, organized, and selected with rules of what can and (more importantly) cannot be said. The archeological procedure controls its own materiality, and is firmly entrenched through a system of ritual and doctrine, in this case the U.S. foreign policy paradigm. The selection of the words and phrases used in the rhetoric was not a random activity, as the definition of the enemy was being formed in an organized effort to take internal decisions and externalize them.

President Bush's responses to the question posed in print media of "why do they hate us"<sup>34</sup> was limited to the issue of their hatred of U.S. freedoms. The U.S. presence and history in the Middle East since 1945, its support for Israel, and its sanctions on Iraq

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<sup>33</sup> Foucault, *Archeology of Knowledge*, 226.

<sup>34</sup> Lewis, "Muslim Rage."

were beyond the conventional boundaries of discussion, thus showing again what questions could and could not be asked. U.S. history and interests were omitted from other references, such as U.S. support for Saddam Hussein before the 1990 invasion of Kuwait, even when the U.S. knew of the atrocities that he was committing. The sudden demonization of Hussein before the invasion in 2003 showed a purposeful lack of memory of the support we provided for him, but these questions and inquiries were not allowed. Even when the rare individual or group would question the buildup to the war, they were quickly dismissed or worse yet deemed unpatriotic. One such example is from when Senator Robert Byrd gave the following speech:

Many of the pronouncements made by this administration are outrageous. There is no other word. Yet this chamber is hauntingly silent. On what is possibly the eve of horrific infliction of death and destruction on the population of the nation of Iraq—a population, I might add, of which over 50 percent is under age 15—this chamber is silent. On what is possibly only days before we send thousands of our citizens to face unimagined horrors of chemical and biological warfare—this chamber is silent. On the eve of what could possibly be a vicious terrorist attack in retaliation for our attack on Iraq, it is business as usual in the United States Senate. We are truly sleepwalking through history. In my heart of hearts I pray that this great nation and its good and trusting citizens are not in for the rudest of awakenings...I truly must question the judgment of any president who can authorize a massive unprovoked military attack on a nation that is 50 percent children is in the highest moral traditions of our country. This war is not necessary at this time. Pressure appears to be having a good result in Iraq...Our challenge is to now find a graceful way out of the box of our own making.<sup>35</sup>

Senator Byrd's speech was outside the discourse and was dismissed, by all but a few intrepid journalists, who along with a few other media members believed that no justification was provided why the war on Iraq was the inevitable response to 9/11 terrorism. Alternatives were not advanced or considered, and veteran journalist Bill

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<sup>35</sup> Senator Robert Byrd, Congressional Speech, quoted in Norman Mailer, "Only in America," *New York Review of Books*, 50: 5, March 27, 2003, 52.

Moyers was correct in his assertion that "what the conservative media did was easy to fathom; they had been cheerleaders for the White House from the beginning and were simply continuing to rally the public behind the President—no questions asked. How mainstream journalists suspended skepticism and scrutiny remains an issue of significance that the media has not satisfactorily explored."<sup>36</sup>

Also in the Moyers piece, is veteran journalist Bob Simon, who was based in the Middle East, told Moyers that "questioning the reporting he was seeing and reading, and the absurdity of putting up a connection between Saddam Hussein and Al-Qaeda."<sup>37</sup> Amidst all this rhetoric, there was little talk of what the actual consequences of responding through war would be, except that the U.S. would be assured of victory. Allies did not like the belligerent rhetoric and the resort to military response, while General Merrill McPeak, the air force Chief of Staff during the Gulf War, argued "that air power was ill suited to this kind of threat. You have to ask what's the endgame? You want to come out with a safer, more secure environment, and its not clear that a massive air attack, unleashing the dogs of hell, will result in an aftermath that is more secure."<sup>38</sup> Despite the misgivings amongst the allies and high-profile military personnel, Bush's rhetoric and use of Realpolitik made it very difficult for anyone who disagreed to make a difference and stop the advance to war. These early and important examples of the use of "the other" in constructing the narratives of 9/11, provided an explanation for

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<sup>36</sup> Bill Moyers, "Buying the War," *Bill Moyer's Journal*.  
[www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/btw/watch.html](http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/btw/watch.html) (accessed December 13, 2012).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Eric Schmitt and Thom Shanker, "Administration Considers Broader, More Powerful Options for Potential Retaliation," *New York Times*, 13 September 2001.

the conflicts that were about to unfold. Terrorism was juxtaposed against the benign framework of U.S. history and foreign policy. Not only did the definition of the enemy enhance the narrative, but also it put in place the foreign policy that served as a gatekeeper to the paradigm.

However, the trail does not end there. During the actual invasion and set up in the Green Zone, we see the same theoretical framework from the earlier narratives being used with dire consequences in every area imaginable. The idea of Western perfectibility took root in almost every phase in the bungled effort to reform Iraq after the actual invasion, thus making Muslim deficiency corrected by the West. From the pre-invasion planning stages the policy took its full form in Baghdad's Little America, known as the Green Zone. This was the headquarters of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). The Green Zone was a walled off compound that stood as the headquarters of the American occupation in Iraq. The CPA held all the officers and government officials who had already bought into the discourse about Arabs and the Middle East and the need to reform by force, and attain retribution. Not only did we see the operational nature of said discourse in the 9/11 narrative, but in the CPA we can see how the examples of the foreign policy in operation. Rajiv Chandrasekeran, journalist and author of "Imperial Life in the Emerald City: Inside Iraq's Green Zone" describes the air of superiority that is everywhere in the palace headquarters of the CPA. "Workers at the compound said it was an unspoken rule that it was always appropriate to praise the mission—that is, the Bush administration's campaign to transform Iraq into a peaceful, modern, secular democracy.

Unless you knew someone very well, you did not question American policy over a meal."<sup>39</sup>

Once again, we see the prohibition of questions, or alternative opinions. This is a prime example of Kuhn's anomaly and Foucault's discursive formation, both at the same time. It shows Foucault's view of discourse not being random, rather it is controlled and organized letting in only that which fits in with the formation. In Kuhn's priority of the paradigm, any statements that don't fit into the paradigm would have to be examined, thus making the paradigm shift. But this was not what was wanted. The paradigm had to remain intact to achieve their operational status, so all statements against it were tossed out, thus making them anomalies. This prevented the "revolutionary science" that Kuhn wrote about, which would have brought in new evidence and a shift in the policy. This shows the direction of the policy in the early days of the invasion. It was an American occupation, but Iraqi's were not seen as fit to help rebuild their own country. They were seen as totally inept and deficient in every way, shape and form right down to the meals, where breakfast cereal was shipped in, and everything that could be outsourced, was. It was as if Iraqi's did not exist in their own land.

From April 2003 to June 2004 the CPA ran Iraq's government. It enacted laws, printed currency, collected taxes, deployed police and spent oil revenue. It was one stop shopping for Western superiority. This was all done with no Iraqi input. Orientalist behavior was central here in the CPA for the policymaking, to categorize, identify and frame a certain outlook. Environs within the Green Zone were also referred to as "the

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<sup>39</sup> Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Imperial Life in the Emerald City: Inside Iraq's Green Zone* (New York: Knopf Books, 2006), 11.

bubble.”<sup>40</sup> Everything within the bubble reflected American culture. Iraqi laws and customs did not apply inside the Green Zone. The whole arrangement was designed to separate them from the Iraqi culture/people. Americans complained of the "slothful habits of the natives."<sup>41</sup> This critique in particular is wholly reminiscent of Edward Said's Orientalism.

Almost every American official in the CPA adhered to the Bush doctrine, and this is seen in the head of the CPA, Paul Bremer. It is in the majority (if not all) of his actions, statements and edicts, as well as others that we see the suffocating nature of the paradigm. These actions, which formed the discursive formation in the CPA, were behind almost every major disastrous decision for the people of Iraq and Americans in the occupation. The U.S. policy paradigm holds in its structure the same tenants of a discursive formation, meaning it is defined by the relationship of the dispersed parts, its objects, concepts, types of statements, and thematic choices in the regular patterns of order or transformation. They both have structured randomness, which hides their deliberate nature in action. By examining a few key statements and decisions by Bremer, the formation will appear and we can see how Bremer used Realpolitik for his decisions, thus keeping said paradigm intact. Bremer stated to author Chandrasekaran that he wanted to corporatize and privatize state-owned enterprises, and to "wean the people off the idea that the state supports everything."<sup>42</sup> Saddam's government had owned hundreds

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>41</sup> David R. Shumay, *Michel Foucault* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989), 104.

<sup>42</sup> Chandrasekaran, *Imperial Life*, 61.

of factories, and subsidized the cost of gasoline, electricity and fertilizer. Every family received monthly food rations. Bremer regarded all of this as unsustainable and too socialist. Chandrasekaran asked Bremer "Why not leave it up to the Iraqi's?" Bremer responded "The Iraqi's have no say in the matter. The United States wants to build not just a democracy, but a free market."<sup>43</sup> These will be telling motives in the later stages of the war.

As Viceroy Bremer only need put down his signature to impose a new law or abolish an old one, he wasn't required to consult with Iraqi's or even seek consent. A second edict Bremer declared again showed that it mattered not what the Iraqi's thought; it was what American policy says and thinks about them.

Bremer stated that there would be no interim government in Iraq—the United States was in charge, and that was settled. When one of the Iraqi exiles interrupted him to say Iraqis wanted Iraqis in charge and not Americans, Bremer stated "you don't represent the country."<sup>44</sup> It was a breathtaking example of orientalist thinking, wrapped up in rhetorical framework of an American telling an Iraqi that he did not represent his own country. The Iraqi's are seen as so deficient that they cannot even participate in the formation of their own government. The rhetoric in these examples is no longer to be understood as the expression of the speaker. Although it was Bremer making these statements, it under the guise of the paradigm that is fully set in place. The paradigm and its operation is right where it wants to be here, using the discourse to achieve objectives

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 62.

and regulating the power of the CPA, thus serving its function of promoting U.S. interests in the battle of power.

This is the start of the formation of this power at the beginning of the war, the dispersed parts of all that Bremer is saying (i.e. concepts, statements) form that structured randomness that is repeated not only in the CPA, but in the same policy paradigm from years gone by. The CPA functioned as the institution that held the paradigm in place with a direct material stake in the outcome and operation.

Edward Said speaks to this again in *Orientalism*.<sup>45</sup> Said maintained that it was the corporate institution where the Western imperialist discourse could work its way into all bodies of work.<sup>46</sup> A whole network of interest in the CPA had a material stake in the success of the operation. Business sectors, government, and education departments all functioned as their own cultural enterprise. When an official went against the discourse he either left or was ousted back to the U.S. to keep the needs of the paradigm in place.

One such example was in the finance/budget department of the CPA. A consultant named McPherson was eager to privatize Iraqi industries and eliminate subsidies. However, there was a huge legal roadblock. Article 43 of the second section of The Hague Convention of 1899—the first set of international treaties that attempted to create laws of warfare—requires an occupying power to respect all laws of the occupied country except when it is necessary to promote public safety. Another consultant, Garner, found out about this and sent a memo to McPherson entitled "Fatal Flaws in Budget

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<sup>45</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

Policy Towards State-Owned Enterprises." Carney argued that the decision "violated the Geneva convention by undermining assets of the Iraqi people."<sup>47</sup> He also accused McPherson of drawing up the policy without adequate Iraqi participation. "Instead of transparency with Iraqi's engaged in decisions, the policy seems to be thinking of the CPA."<sup>48</sup> Consultant Carney gave the opinion that they needed to rethink this.

Carney left Baghdad for good the next day. His decision went against the prevailing discourse, and his opinions and statements were not in keeping with the paradigm in place. Due to the fact that he did not uphold the structure of the CPA and their intentions he could no longer work there. There would be no attempt to weld his views to the attitudes from the discourse, and the CPA policies. Carney's opinions were "anomalies" and thus discarded so the mission could continue undeterred. This shows the discursive formation again in play here with statements made against the institution that violated the regular pattern of thematic choices. To keep that formation in play, the object (consultant Garner) had to be removed.

To correct any further defections from the policy, a major Republican donor, Mr. Foley was brought in to try and privatize industries, once again. Foley repeated his intentions to not seek any Iraqi input and to privatize as quickly as possible. A staffer mentioned it to him about Carney leaving due to the Geneva Convention violation aspect, and Foley stated, "I don't care about any of that stuff, I don't give a shit about

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<sup>47</sup> Chandrasekaran, *Imperial Life*, 123.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

international law. I made a promise to the President that I'd privatize Iraqi businesses."<sup>49</sup> Again, we can see how a paradigm shift was prevented by not allowing any new ideas or in this case adherence to international law. There was a conscious choice to disregard and purposely ignore any and all opinions that thwarted the policy goals. This is a clear example of the stages of Kuhn's paradigm life cycles, with the three platforms being: 1) errors in observation, 2) human misdeeds, and 3) political and economic agenda's.

The error in observation was the refusal of Garner to agree to the Realpolitik operation of the CPA, thus making his opinions and actions against the grain or human misdeeds. He could not uphold the political and economic agenda of the President and policy makers. When the new person, Foley is sent in, the paradigm is upheld and policy remains on course.

The cementing of the policies was as concrete as the Green zone foundations, and "equally important, American culture signatures all over them—just as in Cold War days."<sup>50</sup> This aim of privatizing Iraqi businesses is clearly out of the Cold War days as well. The need to maintain access to markets, and resources would provide U.S. companies with no bid contracts and huge profits. This decision to privatize the businesses also shows Realpolitik in operation, as gaining control over the resources and businesses would cement the U.S. position of power, and reject any ideological concerns. The beneficiaries of this policy were numerous. Political beneficiaries included the CPA, private security firms with direct links to the White House (such as Blackwater),

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Lloyd G. Gardner, *Long Road to Baghdad* (New York: New York Press, 2008), 188.

multinational corporations (such as Haliburton, which fed, clothed, and housed the occupational forces), the puppet government in waiting (Chalabi, et al), neo-conservatives in the administration, and U.S. think tanks that got to see their policies in action. The social benefits of this policy for the United States center around the “America-knows-best” undertakings of the policy. First and foremost, the U.S. continues in the discourse in the service of empire mode. Not only is the belief of American Exceptionalism maintained, but it is put into action vis-à-vis the CPA and the old policy paradigm.

Immediate effects and implications of the discourse were that the rules of what can and cannot be said took precedence in so many key decisions in the occupation. Iraqi's had no say in how to rebuild their country. One such decision, perhaps the most fatal among many is that of the early decision by Bremer in the CPA, on the de-Bathification of Iraq. These forces might have maintained some order, and stopped some of the flow to the insurgents. The removal of Iraqi forces that might have been used to maintain some level of order was compounded by the fact that the U.S. went to war with insufficient troops for the post-war occupation. That immediate period of lawlessness set the atmosphere and conditions for the future, moreover" it signaled clearly to the insurgent groups and others that the United States forces were incapable of policing the territory and asserting their rule of the country."<sup>51</sup> Disbanding the army and the de-Bathification of Iraq was the worst pitfall of the CPA policy in the early days of the invasion.

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<sup>51</sup> Toby Dodge, *Iraq's Future: The Aftermath of Regime Change* (London: Routledge, 2005), 9-23.

Why had not anyone challenged this decision? Did anyone stop to ask if the U.S. had the right to try to build a western style democracy in the Middle East? These are broader questions of the policy paradigm, and many of the answers that policy makers give harken back to the notion of democracy promotion, and American Exceptionalism, whenever and wherever they chose.

## CHAPTER 7

### DEMOCRACY: ONE SIZE FITS ALL?

One of the first things that come to mind as a reason why United States foreign policy has remained at a stalemate for so long is the idea of democracy promotion, and the myth of American Exceptionalism. The idea is that America has a special—even sacred—role to play in world history, and cannot be compared to nations driven by the mundane realities of politics and economics. Just as the rhetoric of 9/11 was used to justify the Iraq war, so too is the rhetoric of democracy promotion used as a shield to mask the real goals of power and money, and corporate expansion and military empire building that have defined America's role as a Global superpower. Such views have been ingrained in the policy. This was evident in Iraq in 2003, and it was assumed that a constitutional democracy would naturally follow regime change. That democracy would easily replace the Ba'athist regime was dead wrong. The failure to challenge the ideological underpinnings of this idea was due to the discourse and operation of said paradigm. "There was ample warning that a transition from a tyranny to a democracy would not be easy, and that the troop level was insufficient to provide stability that political reform required."<sup>1</sup>

The policy of de-Ba'athification resembled a World War II type narrative, which had its rubric from the old policy paradigm. There is a view ensconced in the paradigm that the neo-conservatives ascribe to and this is that history is on Democracy's side, and that American power would accelerate that process by overthrowing entrenched

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<sup>1</sup> Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 119, 207-208.

dictators. This is clear Realpolitik power politics. Hans Morgenthau backs this up in his book "The Purpose of American Politics"<sup>2</sup> by saying that "other countries don't have purposes, the purpose of America, on the other hand, is transcendent: to bring freedom and justice to the rest of the world."<sup>3</sup> However, Morgenthau tracked the United State's record and said that "when you go study the record, it looks as if the United States hasn't lived up to its transcendent purpose. But then he says "to criticize our transcendent purpose is to fall into the error of atheism, which denies the validity of religion on similar grounds-which is a good comparison."<sup>4</sup>

This view of American Exceptionalism and democracy is embedded in the paradigm and to criticize it brings on criticism of Religious undertakings, just as criticism as the narrative of 9/11 and the need for war brought on criticism of being unpatriotic. "Expectations that the world beyond our borders should accommodate the American way of life, are hardly new. Since 9/11 however, our demands have become more insistent. In that regard, neo-conservative writer, Robert Kagan is surely correct in observing that America did not change on September 11th, it only became more itself."<sup>5</sup> This is exactly right, as the paradigm stayed the same, and the United States used the

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<sup>2</sup> Morgenthau, *Purpose of American Politics*.

<sup>3</sup> Noam Chomsky, "America's Yearning for Democracy is a Bad Joke," *Salon* February 4, 2013, [http://www.salon.com/2013/02/04/noam\\_chomsky\\_americas\\_yearning\\_for\\_democracy\\_is\\_a\\_bad\\_joke\\_partner/](http://www.salon.com/2013/02/04/noam_chomsky_americas_yearning_for_democracy_is_a_bad_joke_partner/) (accessed February 4, 2013), 4.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Andrew J. Bacevitch, *The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2008), 10.

same policies to frame the narrative to war, never stopping to learn from our lessons of previous wars.

A good example of this can be seen in the basic lines of U.S. thinking in the organizational chart of the "Civil Administration of Postwar Iraq."<sup>6</sup> There are sixteen boxes, each containing a name in boldface and a designation of the person's responsibility, from CPA official Paul Bremer at the top (answering to the Pentagon), down through the chart. Seven are generals, most of the rest government officials, none Iraqi's. At the very bottom, there is a seventeenth box, about one third the size of others, with no names, no boldface, and no functions: it reads "Iraqi ministry advisers."<sup>7</sup> This shows the belief in U.S. policy makers' thinking that formal democracy is fine, but only if it obeys orders from the U.S. (like New Europe) or the limited top down democracies in Latin America run by the traditional structures of power with which the United States usually ends up being allies with. So democracy is fine to use as one of the reasons to invade and occupy, but God forbid Iraqi's get to set up their own government and guiding principles. This view can also be seen in the comment by Brent Scowcroft, national security advisor for George H. Bush, who spoke for the moderates and said, "if there is an election in Iraq, and the radicals win...we're surely not going to let them take over."<sup>8</sup> One of the reasons why the policy makers wanted control of how and what a

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<sup>6</sup> United States Department of Defense, Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, reproduced in, *New York Times*, May 7, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Bob Herbert, "Spoils of War," *New York Times*, April 10, 2003. [www.nytimes.com/2003/04/10/opinion/spoils-of-war.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2003/04/10/opinion/spoils-of-war.html) (accessed January 7, 2011).

"democracy" would look like for Iraq, is in obvious sight, oil. Iraq was a major prize, and the U.S. wanted control.

After the crucial question of who will be in charge, and who has access to the oil and its distribution, those concerned with the tragedy of Iraq had three basic goals: 1) overthrowing the tyranny, 2) ending the sanctions that were targeting the people, instead of the rulers, and 3) preserving some semblance of world order.

There can be no disagreement from most people on the first two goals. Achieving them is cause for joy, especially for those who protested United States policy and support for Saddam Hussein before his invasion of Kuwait and directly thereafter. The second goal could have been achieved with better policy, but the third goal shows the Bush administration declaring their intent to dismantle what remained of that system of order to control Iraq by force, using Iraq as a testing ground to establish their type of democracy in the Middle East. It is this type of declared intention that has been tried in history before, yet with the operation of this paradigm, the U.S. still did not learn from previous mistakes.

The lessons of wars past visited United States policy once again in the Iraq war. The war was supposed to demonstrate U.S. power, but instead served as an example of U.S. weakness in its adherence to the policy paradigm. On the face of it, it may startle Americans to think of their country preventing true democracy in Iraq, but this part of the narrative has been ingrained in American society for decades. It is a staple of the U.S. foreign policy paradigm that it is inherently pro-democracy—that is the banner under which American wars are made to look good. Even though democracy in this regard

really means a government which serves American interests regardless of how their power is acquired. On the other hand democratically elected governments that defy United States orders are run by despots.

An example of this can be seen in recent events in the Arab spring. Media coverage of the Arab spring depicted the United States as sympathetic to and supportive of the democratic protesters. Along with that is the United States' decades-long financial and military support for most of the targeted despots. The events in the Arab world have forced us to examine this idea of democracy promotion, and relinquish the pro-democracy deceit. This is because one of the main objectives of America's support for Arab dictators has been to make sure that the actual views and beliefs of the people of that nation remain suppressed, because those views often go against the perceived national interests of the policy paradigm. Unfortunately, the last thing the United States has wanted is actual true democracy in the Arab world, largely because democracy will let the people's beliefs—driven by high levels of anti-American sentiment, and high concern over the Palestinian and Israeli conflict—to see the light of day and gain power, rather than be ignored. It should be stated outright that contradictions such as this (eg. espousing Democracy while working against it) can only go unnoticed for so long. These views are antithetical to the truest sense of the word “Democracy,” that is a government of and for the people themselves.

A perfect example of this is a comment from a Director of the Middle East program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies regarding foreign policy and the Arab spring in Egypt. Jon Alterman states:

Many in Israel and America, and even some in Egypt, fear that the elections will produce an Islamist-led government that will tear-up the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, turn hostile to the United States, openly support Hamas and transform Egypt into a theocracy that oppresses women, Christians, and secular Muslims. They see little prospect for more liberal voices to prevail, and view military dictatorship as a preferable outcome. American interests, however, call for a different outcome, one that finds a balance—however uneasy—between the military authorities and Egypt's new politicians. We do not want any one side to vanquish or silence the other. And with lopsided early election results, it is especially important that the outcome not drive away Egypt's educated liberal elite, whose economic connections and know-how will be vital for attracting investment and creating jobs. Our instinct is to search for the clarity we saw in last winter's televised celebrations. However, what Egyptians, and Americans, need is something murkier—not a victory, but an accommodation.<sup>9</sup>

This statement is bold in its intent and outlook. Why should Egyptians do what America wants policy wise? Isn't the purpose of a democracy to voice your own opinions and direction for your country pursuant to your own countries desires, and not the United States' with the big carrot and stick? American interests should not determine the kind of government that Egypt has. The fact that Alterman voices such an opinion shows how it is implicit in the policy making, and how the author is advocating this. The right of the United States to tell other countries how to govern themselves has been and still is one of the main tenants in the United States foreign policy paradigm. It is seen as a divine right, in the truest sense of the Orientalist tradition.

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<sup>9</sup> Jon B. Alterman, "This Revolution Isn't Being Televised," *New York Times*. December 30, 2011. [www.nytimes.com/2011/12/31/opinion/egypts-real-revolution.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/31/opinion/egypts-real-revolution.html?_r=0) (accessed January 2, 2012).

Again, this is Realpolitik, showing that the United States acts only to advance its interests without regard to moral and ethical questions. The U.S. policy paradigm has been doing this for a very long time, vocalizing support for democracy promotion, while simultaneously acting against it, and Iraq in 2003 gave them just the chance they were looking for.

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSION

The invasion and occupation of Iraq was an attempt to re-institute by force the old system of control that is cemented in the United States policy paradigm. I have shown the existence and operation of said paradigm by utilizing Thomas Kuhn's model of paradigm life cycles. It has been shown that the three planks in Kuhn's cycle directly coincide with U.S. policy for Iraq. Moreover, I have demonstrated that this policy has been traced all the way back to the cold war, and enabled those with a certain agenda to clinch this policy, and construct an accompanying narrative. The three stages of Kuhn's paradigm life cycle which I have used to show the operation of U.S. policy are: 1) errors in observation, 2) human misdeeds, and 3) political economic agenda's.

Through the complete examination of these stages I was able to show the content and maneuverings of the policy, and how the foreign policy was able to remain rigid, denying all challenges. The paradigm was able to keep its stature and allegiance and continue to wield undue influence for decades, affecting both Gulf War I, and most importantly the disastrous Iraq invasion of 2003. Other key points in the Kuhnian structure, such as “anomalies,” demonstrated how the policy paradigm has failure built into it, by denying challenges and independent thought. The failure of the paradigm to take into account any voice of opposition or new evidence thereby discrediting the individual or organization, led to the continuation of the narrative. Secrecy, mistruths, and specific agendas were shown to be housed in the discourse.

Michel Foucault's discourse analysis gave us a road map of how the discourse was operated by "human misdeeds" instead of letting new evidence in for the paradigm to shift. Kuhn's structures have given us the perfect view of what happens when a paradigm is neglected and left to stand dead in the wind. The discourse was used during 9/11 to bolster the cause for the invasion of Iraq. Moreover the operational nature exhibited the use of "the other," and Edward Said's concept of "Orientalism." Any opinions contrary to the 9/11 narratives were thrown out, as Foucault calls it "outside the discourse." It has been shown that even when opposition did manifest itself, such as CPA officials in the green zone in Iraq going totally against the policy of Iraqis having no say in their own forming of a government, that they were discarded or left due to the inability to voice opposition. The green zone was shown to have operatives in power with a vested interest in seeing no changes to the policy, and silencing those who disagreed. Neo-conservative goals were pushed and hammered through with blinders on, leaving no space outside the paradigm for challenges. Thus Kuhn's "revolutionary science," which is the phase where new information or opposition is examined and let into the paradigm, thus making sure a shift, did not and could not happen.

I have demonstrated that the foreign policy paradigm is in dire need of an overhaul, and if the steps of Kuhn's structure were to be followed, a paradigm shift would have occurred. The false narratives built around 9/11, coupled with so many mistruths regarding weapons of mass destruction could have and would have given a pause, to examine the policy instead of the rush to war. If the truth was let in then all of these reasons and policies would have shifted the paradigm. New directions and ideas would have surfaced to deal with the threat of terrorism and the 9/11 attacks. Instead, a war was

waged on a country that had nothing to do with 9/11, for the benefit of those in charge with political and economic agendas. As Kuhn stated “all hitherto-unexplained phenomena will in due course be accounted for in terms of the established framework.”<sup>1</sup>

This is exactly what has taken place in United States foreign policy at present. With the tenth anniversary of the recent Iraq war upon us, we now know the information and actions regarding the Iraq war are being exposed and examined and being called to account. The established framework from which these actions and decisions came out of has shown the paradigm to be faulty and unable to deal with the new geo-political realities in the Middle East. Major rethinking is underway by a new administration on the way United States foreign policy is viewed and activated. This is exactly what is needed—the small crack in the paradigm, to open the door and restructure U.S. foreign policy objectives to truly coincide with our nations core values of real democracy, governed by and for the people, not a controlled paradigm that serves those with ulterior motives.

The use of democracy promotion and American Exceptionalism were also called into account as one of the building blocks in the paradigm that framed the debate for the Iraq war. It has been shown that this too was used to bolster the cause for an unjust war against Iraq, with examples being given from the CPA (Coalition Provisional Authority) in the setting up of a government in Iraq. The policy of Realpolitik was shown to be of tremendous influence in the CPA's operation in and out of the Green Zone, and the discourse of the war. This use of Realpolitik has not departed, as was exhibited by the

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<sup>1</sup> Kuhn, *Structure*, 4.

Arab spring in Egypt, with policy makers still telling Egyptians that the United States' policy objectives need accommodating. The view that other countries have to do what the United States tells them in their own free elections is not democracy, and thwarts new avenues that could be taken. The United States voices support for these elections, but only if it provides stability, but stability means conformity to the U.S. policy paradigm. I have shown how this destructive view has been in the paradigm since the cold war, coining the adage "stability in the region." Slowly, this may be starting to be examined, as President Obama has not sent troops into many hot spots in the Middle East such as Libya and Syria. However, it remains to be seen what will happen with our policy objectives in terms of Egypt, Tunisia and other spots in the Middle East who want a change and to break free of their current situations. It is imperative that the paradigm shift to allow new ways of dealing with the challenges of new governments and what the respective peoples in those countries want for themselves, not what we want them to want.

In the aftermath of the Iraq war, we need to bring everything out into the open and acknowledge all the mistakes that were made and why. The secret agendas and mistruths have all come to light and this is a good start. But we must address and rectify how the paradigm permitted this to occur. First and foremost is the refocus of the effects of our policy on actual people, those here at home and those abroad.

As, Nir Rosen, author of *Aftermath: Following the Bloodshed of America's Wars in the Muslim World*, states:

“It is impossible to imagine a power such as the United States caring about people, even its own. The effects our wars and policies have on them are ignored. Perhaps if policy analysts and policy makers paid attention to the people of Iraq, Afghanistan or elsewhere, they would rely less on English-speaking elites who are disconnected from the reality on the ground. They would then be better aware of what the people want, which movements are popular, and who has power. In Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as other countries in the Muslim world, the people have obstructed American goals. If America had listened to the people, it might not have gone to war with the Muslim world after September 11th.”<sup>2</sup>

I have demonstrated the many ways in which the foreign policy paradigm has been destructive, have demonstrated what needs to be addressed, and identified the lessons we can learn and the way out of the abyss. First and foremost is the acceptance and acknowledgement that the Iraq war was “an unnecessary war.”<sup>3</sup> After utilizing all the reasons why the U.S. had to go in, (e.g. weapons of mass destruction, democracy promotion, etc.) both were proven false. Not only do those in power need to admit the United States lost the war, but that when as anomalies pile up and are not allowed to challenge the policy, the “United States gets itself into big trouble when the marketplace

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<sup>2</sup> Scott Horton, “Aftermath: Six Questions for Nir Rosen,” *Harper's Magazine*, October 22 2010. <http://harpers.org/blog/2010/10/aftermath-six-questions-for-nir-rosen/> (accessed February 22, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Jordan Michael Smith, “Washington's New Anti-War Movement,” *Salon*, March 7, 2012. [http://www.salon.com/2012/03/08/washingtons\\_new\\_antiwar\\_movement/](http://www.salon.com/2012/03/08/washingtons_new_antiwar_movement/) (accessed March 8, 2012).

of ideas breaks down and when the public and our leadership do not have an open debate about what to do.”<sup>4</sup>

There was very little debate of substance about the decision to go to war, and I have shown this to be due to the paradigm and those that were in its orbit. Advocates in the Bush administration argued that it would be easy to set up a democracy in Iraq, but they knew nothing about the country and the sectarian divisions. Therefore it is incumbent upon policy makers to have experts who know the countries inside and out, speak the languages and do not have a strict adherence to Realpolitik or any other paradigm stalwart. Poor planning and post-occupation plans further show this to be the case. All of my examples and conclusions have led to what the goal was at the outset, to prove that the neglected U.S. policy paradigm needs to be overhauled to reflect new realities in a rapidly changing world. Only by doing so can the United States live up to its full potential in the truest sense of democracy, and prevent foreign policy disasters such as the Iraq invasion and occupation. We need to develop an approach or different way of looking at the world and America's place in it, and the first step is a much needed paradigm shift in U.S. foreign policy.

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<sup>4</sup> Stephen M. Walt, “Top 10 Lessons of the Iraq War,” *Foreign Policy*, March 20, 2012. [www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/03/20/top\\_ten\\_lessons\\_of\\_iraq\\_war](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/03/20/top_ten_lessons_of_iraq_war) (accessed March 8, 2012).

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