This chapter examines the two key dynamics of inter-Arab politics, which are political economy and ideology. It analyzes how both ideological considerations and economic interests influence the foreign policies and alliance choices of Arab states. It suggests that despite the pervasiveness of ideology in Middle East politics, alignments and realignments in inter-Arab politics are determined far more by elite perceptions of threats to regime security than they are by ideological concerns.

This chapter examines international alliances, regime security and inter-Arab politics. It proposes the regime security perspective as an alternative to the Neorealist approach to alignment and alliance politics. It explains that this alternative approach emphasizes the different empirical realities faced by states in the Arab Middle East and throughout the developing world. It re-evaluates the key aspects of international relations theory in the Third World and suggests that alignments for post-colonial states are far more than simply deterministic responses to systemic security stimuli.