INTRODUCTION
Foreign policy has been endowed various definitions. Hartman describes foreign policy as "a systematic statement of deliberately selected national interests". Normal Hill says that "it is the content or substance of a nation's effort to promote its interests vis-a-vis other nations". For George Modelski, "foreign policy is the systematic activities evolved by communities for changing the behaviour of other states and for adjusting their own activities to the environment".

Basically, foreign policy involves the formulation and implementation of a group of principles which shape the behaviour pattern of a state while negotiating with other states to protect or further its vital national interests.

A country's foreign policy is a continuous, wide phenomenon which embraces political strategy, general objectives, stated strategy, and a series of routine actions - trade exchanges, cultural encounters, exchange of diplomatic notes, etc.

The foreign policy of states is shaped by domestic conditions, by the values and perceptions of policy makers, and by the global and regional environments in which they exist.¹ National concerns influence what governments would like to do, but the environment determines what governments are able to do.²

² Kenneth Waltz, Theory of International Politics (Reading Mars: Addison-Weeley, 1979), P. 23.
The study of the foreign policy of developing states is usually dominated by three approaches. The PSYCHOLOGISTIC approach which views foreign policy as a function of the impulses and ideosyncracies of a single leader (kings, presidents are the sources of foreign policy and war and peace are matters of personal taste and individual choice) Basically, foreign policy is seen as a "policy of public relations", where objectives are to improve the image of the state, gain popularity, and divert attention from domestic troubles. This approach makes foreign policy appear erratic, irrational and it undermines the contextual basis of foreign policy.

The TRADITIONALIST or the Great Powers' approach popularized by stalwarts like Hans Morgenthau, views foreign policy as a function of the East-West Conflict, e.g. foreign policy of developing states lacks autonomy, reacts only to external stimuli and the domestic sources of foreign policy are completely undermined.

The REDUCTIONIST approach views foreign policy in developing states as determined by the same processes and decisional calculi that shape the foreign policy of developed states. The basic difference is only quantitative, the former have fewer resources and thus conduct foreign policy on a smaller scale. This approach does not account for the specific features of developing states such as modernisation, low level of political institutionalisation, dependency factors etc.

The solution could well be to conceptualize foreign policy output as a ROLE. The role concept is convenient, since it allows the disaggregation of foreign policy
output into its relevant components - the actor's general objectives, orientations, strategy, i.e. role conception, and the specific behaviour i.e. role performance.

Pertaining to the above framework, this study, *Foreign Policy of Syria under President Assad (1970-1990)*, has been classified into analysis of the general objectives, understanding the orientations, and assessing concrete behaviour. The main effort is to unravel the disparity ratio between foreign policy role conception (general objectives and declaratory objectives) and the role performance (actual behaviour). A major part of the work is devoted to the study of the determinants of the variations of this disparity ratio, the reasons for this disparity and whether foreign policy orientations change over time and what are the sources of these changes.

This work has been classified into six chapters according to the following criteria.

The first chapter gives a bird's eye view of the historical development of Syria, emphasising the events which catapulted President Assad to power in 1970.

The domestic environment plays an important role in the making of foreign policy. The geography, population, military capabilities, political structure, economic conditions, social change, process of modernization, etc have an impact on a state's foreign policy. The second chapter deals with such domestic determinants of Syrian foreign policy and covers Assad's rise to power.
The third chapter deals with Syria's degree of involvement in Arab politics, based on the premise of quietism versus activism and details Syria's relations with its Arab neighbours.

The fourth chapter deals with the fluctuating relationship Syria had with the Palestinians.

The fifth chapter discusses Syria's relations with the three non-Arab neighbours - Israel, Iran and Turkey.

The sixth chapter deals with Syria's relation with the superpowers, USA and USSR.

The final substantive section is the conclusion of this study. The manifestations of the 20-years' foreign policy into the decade of 1990s have been covered in the concluding part.

The principal hypothesis of this study was that Syria of pre-1970 years has dramatically changed after 1970. Its chronic political instability of the 1950s and 1960s is largely a thing of the past. The regime, especially since 1970, has won unprecedented popular legitimacy and international recognition. This marked change becomes evident when the evolution of its foreign policy after 1970 is unravelled.
Other subsidiary hypotheses were to analyse how far has national interest taken precedence over pan-Arabism in Syria; whether President Hafiz al Assad's foreign policy is dogmatic or pragmatic; whether his approach is practical or impressionist; and, last but not least, the success ratio of his foreign policy undertakings vis-a-vis Arab states, non-Arab neighbours and the two superpowers.

Arab states, including Syria, have been studied from many angles - politics, history, political evolution, ideologies, intellectual trends, etc. Studies on specific foreign policies of Arab states are almost negligible. The existing literature on foreign policy analysis suffers from a number of limitations - it is of a descriptive or prescriptive genre, rarely linked to the recent conceptualisation of foreign policy. Most of it belongs to the tradition of diplomatic history or commentary on current affairs. The reasons for this can be the underdeveloped state of the discipline of foreign policy analysis in the Third World where external behaviour is analyzed as a reaction to Great Powers' policy towards the Third World. A second factor is the limited data available. In these states foreign policy affairs are shrouded in secrecy, and are mostly perceived as a matter of utmost national security. Thirdly, in the Arab world, scholars have placed more emphasis on regional dynamics than on single actor behaviour. There is more emphasis on Arab-Israeli, or inter-Arab relations. Foreign policy analysis of West Asia has been plagued by inadequate conceptualisation, over emphasis on historicism and the uniqueness of the Arab-Islamic situation, and neglect of a truly comparative outlook.
In this work, both primary and secondary sources have been extensively used. An effort has been made to depart from the methodology commonly used by western scholars researching Syria who generally fail to use the abundance of data available inside the borders of Syria. The research for the completion of this thesis included a field work within the borders of Syria, consulting documents available there and interviewing Syrian policy makers, analysts, people from the media and the populace.

The foreign policy situation in the Arab world is subject to a great extent, to the exigencies of the domestic situation. The correlation between foreign policy and domestic legitimacy is very much evident. The Arab world possesses several common elements that predominate over inter-Arab variations and make them a distinct entity. They share a cultural homogeneity or commonality of language, history and tradition, a common concentration of relevant resources, a common and constant social conflict in the form of the Arab-Zionist conflict. The most important commonality is the dominant intellectual trend of Arab Nationalism and the call for Arab unity. The pan-Arab ideology reflects the conviction that the Arab world is one nation and its division into small states is an aberration resulting from "foreign designs".

The high level of Arab interaction due to this feeling of oneness belies some established theories of the global system, e.g. Galtung's theory of intense interaction among developed nations and very limited interaction among developing ones.

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A basic component of Arab political culture has remained the belief that Arab nationalism can be translated into Arab statehood and that the present artificial division of the Arab states is only temporary. More than the ruling regimes it is the masses who believe this. The result - Arab states, foreign relations seem to be a part of the politics of an extended family. It is also because of this that pan-Arab issues like the Palestinian problem play a major role in ensuring the legitimacy of a regime. Thus, strong linkages between Arab societies expose the Arab states to extensive penetration and intervention by other Arab governments. For example, in times of conflicts within the state system, Arab governments are often exposed, both to traditional forms of pressure and to externally-generated subversive pressure as well. Therefore, it becomes necessary for Arab states to legitimise their foreign policy activities to their domestic components. The efforts by regimes for domestic legitimisation constitute a primary motivating factor.

Conflict in this area is endemic. Examples are the Arab-Israel conflict, disputes over territorial issues, a number of sectarian and ethnic division which cut across state boundaries, causing not only intra-state but also inter-state conflicts. And then, there are the two universal values of Arabism and Islam which not only just weaken people's identification with their own states but also undermine the legitimacy and stability of regimes deemed disloyal to these two values.
It is contended in this work that Syria is a key player in the Levant and cannot be sidelined. By virtue of its pivotal geographical location, Syria cannot be left out in any serious effort to bring peace to the region.

Both the North-South axis or the East-West axis of Syria by itself would suffice to give Syria crucial regional importance. From north to south, Syria link Turkey and the peninsula of Asia Minor with South Asia and the oil-rich Arabian Peninsula. From east to west, it constitutes the natural corridor between the two most populous nations in the Arab world, Iraq and Egypt. Because of Iraq's and Egypt's comparable strength in isolation, Syria constitutes the key to primacy within the region. Any nation that can bring Syria within its sphere of influence or at least keep Syria out of the sphere of influence of either nation, while cultivating close ties with Syria, can become enormously powerful regionally.

Syria's place in the internal and external security of Israel magnifies Syria's strategic significance to global importance. Principally because of the tactical advantages of its border with Israel and its potential for influencing popular sentiment and internal affairs in Lebanon, Jordan or among the Palestinians. Thus, Syria constitutes the major Arab front with Israel.

There is this latent tension in the orientation of Syrian foreign policy between the norm of pan-Arabism and the interest of the state, between the conception and role performance. There is evidently a growing discrepancy between the pan-Arab belief system and state behaviour based on raison d'etre. The gap between the sources of a
particular policy, which are in many cases specific state interests, and the justification of that policy, usually articulated in pan-Arab rhetoric, is becoming increasingly obvious.

Syria's foreign policy orientation has been rooted in the frustrations of Syrian nationalist aspirations by western imperialism. The division of Syria, the creation of Israel, and the betrayal by the West produced a strong brew of revisionist and irredentist thrust to Syrian foreign policy. Foreign policy, nevertheless, is shaped by capabilities and frustrations, and the truncated Syrian state provides a very thin resource base for a revisionist foreign policy. Therefore, Syrian foreign policy continues to be shaped by the conflict between residual but strongly entrenched revisionist dreams and an ascendant realist strategy dictated by the limits of Syria's power and the constraints of the environment.

Syrians still do not perceive the regional environment as a classical state system of distinctive national entities; the Arab states are still thought to make up a nation with an overriding national interest that ought to govern their foreign policy. Identification with the current Syrian state has yet to take the form of an exclusive Syrian nationalism. Rather, Syria's special identity is still Arab: the Syrians consider themselves as most Arab of Arabs, the conscience of Arab and as the main champion of Arabs. Thus, Syria regards itself as better able than other Arab states. It is entitled to draw by right on the wealth of the Arab oil states, to demand the ouster of a fellow Arab state (Egypt) or even to discipline the pursuit of Palestinian "particularism" by the PLO.
Syrian foreign policy reached a climax under the radical wing of the Ba'ath Party in the period 1965-1970, when an attempt was made to make Damascus the bastion of the pan-Arab revolution. Support for war or liberation of Palestine, attacks on western interests and clients in the region, were used to mobilize resources of the whole Arab world against the regional status quo.

Such a role conception was the result of the Syrian perception of being the "beating heart of Arabism". Ba'athist doctrine regarded the formation of one Arab umma their "eternal mission". Syria was not a national unit but a base for their national mission. This radicalism led to the war of 1967, the defeat and loss of more land to Israel.

When Hafez al-Assad came to power in 1970, he inherited the reins of a state committed to revolutionary Arab nationalism and an intense revisionism. His foreign policy was basically a reaction to the defeat of 1967 and the collapse of Ba'athist revolutionary nationalist strategy implemented in the run-up to the war. In the pre-1967 period, as a defence minister he could fathom the military risks and costs of provoking Israeli attacks on an unprepared Syrian army. In 1968, Assad emerged as leader of a faction inside the Ba'ath regime calling for a change of course. His realist conclusion was the realization that the gap between the goals and the capabilities was too wide.
The first noticeable change was a considerable toning down of Syria's vocal policy declarations, the focus on recovery of Arab lands and priority to defence capabilities, primarily to gain diplomatic leverage. Thus, his strategy had a four-pronged approach: priority for the buildup of a regular Syrian army and the subordination of all guerrilla activities to conventional military strategy; a close alliance with Arab states, necessary as partners in any war against Israel; a detente with the traditional Arab oil states who alone had the resources to finance an Arab military build-up; an end to the pursuit of revolution inside and outside Syria because it divided Arabs and diverted them from the struggle with their main opponent, Israel.

Assad's immediate objective after assuming power was to extricate Syria from its isolated position in the Arab world. Implicit in his foreign policy was a willingness to open a "new leaf" in Syria's uneasy relationship with its neighbours, regardless of whether the regimes were "progressive" or "reactionary". His other foreign policy goals were to regain the lost Golan Heights, to organize and lead Arab radical forces, to emerge as a leader in Arab politics, to increase her leverage over the moderate Arab states, to procure financial aid from them, to exert sufficient influence over the PLO with a view to controlling the organisation and using it as a bargaining card in intra-Arab politics and to watch closely development in Lebanon.

Gradually, Syrian foreign policy showed a practical acceptance of the Arab state system. This trend became apparent in the limited objectives of the 1973 war, the detente with the traditional Arab states, and Syrian acceptance of UN Resolution 242. A parallel trend which developed alongside was the triumph of narrow state
interest over Arab interest. Where they diverged, state interest took precedence over pan-Arab visions. The result was repeated subordination of the Palestinian cause to Syrian strategy and security. A pragmatic diplomacy mobilized both Arab money and Soviet arms in an extraordinary expansion of Syrian military power. A greater willingness to play the game of international realpolitik seemed to pay dividends. Within 5 years of Assad's regime, Syria came to be acknowledged as a part of the "Arab triangle" along with Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

For Assad internal affairs were a base for external action, for in his mind the two were inextricably linked, to be strong abroad, he had to be strong at home. He succeeded in forming his foreign policy on the bedrock of tensions between the established Syrian framework of political factionalism and new forces trying to break out of that framework and on the tensions between Syrian provincialism and pan-Arabism.

A committed Arab nationalist, Assad has added strength, stability and a coherent strategy to Syria's desire to become the fountainhead of Arab nationalism.