

Centre for West Asian Studies

School of international Studies

PhD Programme

Course Number: WA627N

Course Title: Government and Politics in the Fertile Crescent Countries

Course Teacher: Bansidhar Pradhan

Credits: Two

Instruction Method: Lectures/Seminars/Tutorials

Course Duration: One Semester (Winter Semester)

Contact Hours: Two Per Week

Evaluation Method: Sessional Work and Semester Examination

Objective: The Fertile Crescent constitutes an important sub-region in West Asia and comprises Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, the Occupied Palestinian territories of West Bank and Gaza Strip, and Israel. Developments within this sub-region have not only shaped West Asian politics but also acted as catalyst in the involvement of major powers. The Fertile Crescent was the seat of two great empires in the Arab-Islamic history: the Umayyads and the Abbasids. It also formed the nucleus of Arab nationalism. The consequences of the division of this sub-region into small states by imperial powers have been profound with which the area is still grappling with in terms of perennial turmoil, prolonged inter-state conflicts, authoritarian state structures, lack of effective political participation, etc., On the one hand, the artificial imperial constructs have sustained the bilateral disputes at the local levels. On the other hand, these bilateral disputes have escalated into such a level that they have been determining the parameters of regional politics and setting the regional agenda. Such situations, ironically, have been used as pretext by outside powers to intervene in the region's affairs, having ramifications for the internal order itself. Further, the very process of state formation in the Fertile Crescent has resulted in a diversity of political systems and structures having a bearing on the governments and politics of the sub-region. Furthermore, one is witnessing perhaps the longest and most powerful nationalist struggle, the Palestinian struggle, having far reaching implications for peace and stability in West Asia. The course aims at exposing the students to these complex political dynamics in the Fertile Crescent revolving around the role of outside powers, ethnicity, religion, sectarianism, nationalism, ideological struggle, powerful and dominant personalities, etc.

Learning Outcome: After completing the Course, students would be equipped with the essential analytical tools to critically comprehend the complex dynamics of Government and Politics in the Fertile Crescent Region, both from conceptual as well as empirical angles. Such skills would enable them to enhance their domain expertise and motivate them to undertake cutting edge/innovative research.

Course Content

1. Situating Fertile Crescent in the West Asian Region:

- ❖ Imagining the Sub-Region
- ❖ Land and People
- ❖ Ethno-Religious Diversity
- ❖ Fertile Crescent Before Islam
- ❖ Arab-Islamic Identity
- ❖ Strategic Importance

2. Pre-Independent Political History: The Umayyad Rule. The Abbasid Empire. Ottoman State Structure and Policies. Arab Nationalism and the Revolt. Zionism. Fertile Crescent Under Mandate.

3. Process of State Formation : Nationalist/Anti-Imperialist Struggles. Role of Imperial Powers. Artificial Creation of Small States and the Border Issue. Search for National Identity and Political Stability.

4. Post-Independent Political Evolution and Ideologies: Constitutional Evolution. Monarchy. Republicanism. Baáthism. Ideological Struggle. Consociational Democracy. Parliamentary Democracy.

5. Political Structures and Processes : Post Independent Political Developments. Political Institutions. Authoritarian State Structures and Security Apparatus. Role of Military. Role of Minorities and Tribes. Political Actors and Political Participation.

6. Nationalist Movement: Palestinian Struggle for Statehood; Political Dynamics of a National Liberation Movement.

7. Contemporary Issues Confronting the Fertile Crescent:

The declining importance of the Palestine Question in Internal Politics. Popular Uprisings in the Arab World and Regime response.

SELECT READINGS

Fertile Crescent

General

Agwani, M.S. (1969), *Communism in the Arab East* (New Delhi: Asia Publishing House).

Allen, Richard(1984), *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Fertile Crescent* (London: Westview Press).

Hurewitz, J.C. (1982), *Middle East Politics: The Military Dimension* (Boulder:Westview Press).

Kayyali, A.W. ed., (1979) ,*Zionism, Imperialism and Racism* (London: CroomHelm).

Khadduri, Majid (1970), *Political Trends in the Arab World: The Role of Ideas and Ideals in Politics* (Blatimore: John Hopkins).

Khoury, Philip S. (1987), *Syria and the French Mandate: The Politics of Arab Nationalism 1920-45* (London: I.B. Tauris).

Korany, Bahgat, Brynen, Rex and Noble, Paul(1998), *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World, vol.2, Comparative Experiences*(Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers).

Lenezowski, George, ed. (1975), *Political Elites in the Middle East* (Washington D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research).

Long, David E ,Reich, Bernard and Gasiorowski,Mark (2011), *The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa* (Boulder: Westview Press).

Longrigg, Stephen Hemsley (1958), *Syria and Lebanon Under French Mandate* (London: Oxford University Press).

Owen, Roger(1992), *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East* (London and New York: Routledge).

Saikal, Amin and Schnabel, Albrecht, eds.(2003) *Democratization in the Middle East: Experiences, Strategies, Challenges*, (Tokyo:UN University Press).

COUNTRY STUDIES

Lebanon

Agwani, M.S.ed. (1965), *The Lebanese Crisis, 1958: A Documentary Study* (New Delhi:Asia Publishing House).

Binder, Leonard, ed. (1966), *Politics in Lebanon* (New York: John Wiley).

Bulloch, John (1977), *Death of a Country: The Civil War in Lebanon* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson).

Gordon, David C. (1980), *Lebanon: The Fragmented Nation* (London:Croom Helm).

Hudson, Michael C. (1968), *The Precarious Republic: Political Modernization in Lebanon*, (London: Random House).

Najem, Tom(2012), *Lebanon: The Politics of a Penetrated Society* (New York: Routledge).

Salibi, Kamal S. (1988), *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered* (London: Ithaca Press).

------(1976) ,*Cross Roads to Civil War* (New York: Caravan Book).

Suleiman, M.W. (1967), *Political Parties in Lebanon: The Challenge of a Fragmented Political Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).

Winslow, Charles (1996), *Lebanon: War and Politics in a Fragmented Society* (London:Routledge).

Zamir, Meir (1985), *The Formation of Modern Lebanon* (London: Croom Helm).

Syria

Ajami,Fouad(2012),*The Syrian Rebellion* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press).

Hinnebusch, Raymond (2001), *Syria: Revolution From Above* (London and New York: Routledge).

Lesch, David W.(2005), *The New Lion of Damascus: Bashar al Asad and Modern Syria* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press).

----- (2012), *Syria:The Fall of the House of Assad* (London: Yale University Press).

Seale, Patrick (1988), *Assad of Syria: The Struggle for the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris).

----- (1965) ,*The Struggle for Syria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Zisser, Eyal (2001), *Assad's Legacy: Syria in Transition* (New York: New York University Press).

Iraq

Davis, Eric (2005), *Memories of State: Politics, History and Collective Identity in Modern Iraq* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London:University of California Press).

Lukitz, Liora(1995), *Iraq: The Search for National Identity* (London: Frank Cass).

Marion, Farouk-Sluglett (2001), *Iraq Since 1958: From Revolution to Dictatorship* (London: IB. Tauris).

Pasha, A.K. (2003), *Iraq: Sanctions and Wars* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers).

Simons, Geoff (1996), *Iraq: From Sumer to Saddam* (Hourdmills: Macmillan).

Stansfield, Gareth, R.V. (2003), *Iraqi Kurdistan: Political Development and Emergent Democracy* (London: Routledge).

Tripp,Charles(2007), *A History of Iraq* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press).

Jordan

Abidi, A.H.H. (1965), *Jordan: A Political Study, 1948-1957* (New Delhi: Asia Publishing House).

Aruri, Nasser H. (1972), *Jordan: A Study in Political Developments* (The Hague: MartinusNijhoff).

Bailey, Clinton (1984), *Jordan's Palestine Challenge, 1948-1983: A Political History* (Boulder: West View Press).

Bligh, Alexander (2002), *The Political Legacy of King Hussein* (Brighton and Portland, UK: Sussex Academic Press).

Boulby, Marion (1999), *The Muslim Brotherhood and the Kings of Jordan, 1945-1993* (Atlanta, Scholars Press).

Cohen, Amon (1982), *Political Parties in the West Bank under the Jordan Regime, 1949-1967* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).

Milton-Edwards, Beverley and Hinchcliffe, Peter (2009), *Jordan: A Hashemite Legacy*(New York: Routledge).

Patai, Raphael (1958), *Kingdom of Jordan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

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Palestine

Cobban, Helena (1984), *The Palestine Liberation Organization: People, Power and Politics* (London:Cambridge Univesity Press).

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----- (2020) ,*The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonial Conquest and Resistance* (London:Profile Books).

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Israel

Avineri, Shlomo (1981), *The Making of Modern Zionism: The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State* (New York: Basic Books).

Badi, Joseph (1963), *The Government of the State of Israel: A Critical Account of Its Parliament, Executive and Judiciary* (New York: Twayne Publishers).

Etzioni-Halvey, Eva (1977), *Political Culture in Israel: Cleavage and Integration Among Israeli Jews* (New York and London: Praeger Publishers).

Landau, Jacob M. (1969), *The Arabs in Israel: A Political Study* (London: OxfordUniversity Press).

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Rackman, Emanuel (1955), *Israel's Emerging Constitution, 1948-51* (New York: Columbia University Press).

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