

MStudies, The International Relations of the Modern Middle East

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Lecture 3, The Post-Colonial Period – World War II and beyond

Themes:

- 1. Processes of modernization , and the concept of the nation in the new Arab State**
- 2. Concepts of Governance, and the development of fierce and shadow states**

I. World War II

Themes: 1. Where WWI had been the start of real colonialism, WWII marked the beginning of the end of colonialism for many of the MENA states.

2. WWII, although fought inside the MENA region, was not of the same importance there as was WWI.

3. **Question:** How did the colonial powers leave the region – what did they leave behind, and how did this effect future political and economic development there?

II. World War II Overview

1. 1940 France fell, and Germany occupied most of Western Europe. Battle of Britain took place between the German Luftwaffe and the Royal Airforce. The Axis powers at this point appeared to be in a strong position to win – having reached Stalingrad in Russia, and taken most of southern Africa.
2. 1940-1942. Axis Power pincer movement closes on British position in Egypt. 1942 – General Rommel's Afrika Corp penetrates Egypt from the South, pushing British forces back to Al-Amain, 100 miles from Alexandria and within striking distance of the Suez Canal
3. 1942. The tide turns. The RAF wins out against the Luftwaffe, although communication lines and oil fields in Middle East are still vulnerable. British counter-offensive in Egypt drives Rommel West, out of Egypt, across Libya and finally into Tunisia, where he is defeated.
4. The period of uncertainty for Britain during the Axis pincer offensive, and the humiliation of France under German occupation offer colonies the opportunity to escape their colonial control.
5. Period of transition between early 1940s and mid-1950s marked by two important characteristics: 1) The first group to inherit power in the newly minted states generally mimicked European ideas and policies, and stayed tied to their apron (and purse) strings. Their overthrow normally caused huge upheaval and a complete social and ideological break with the past. 2) The 1948 Arab War with Israel (Israel's independence, Palestine's *nakba*), was fought by newly independent states – Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq – with tenuous command over their militaries and their provisioning; little governing or foreign policy experience, and no settled budgets or planning apparatus. The experience taught the Arabs (and primarily their militaries) not just humiliation, but that they needed to take control of their new states, improve

their security, build better alliances with foreign military arms producers, build modern economic structures, and create resilient Arab identities.

III. War Facts: Egypt

1. 1939 Egypt, still under 1936 'independence treaty' with Britain – which maintained British military and intelligence privileges) broke relations with Germans when Britain entered the war.
2. Though the pivot of British (Allied) defense system, Egypt itself hedged its bets by maintaining Axis contacts, as Allied victory **not** a foregone conclusion.
3. Over 500,000 British and Commonwealth troops passed through Egypt during the War. Because Egypt was the centre of Allied action, it was targeted by the Axis military ops. Air-raids on Alexandria's harbor during Rommel's penetration.
4. Economically: Egypt suffered rampant inflation, food shortages, bread riots. War-time unemployment exceeded 200,000, gave impetus to labour movement, which gained momentum during the War.
5. Politically, the main institutions – the King, parliament, Wafd party – were discredited. (Constitution of 1923 gave wide powers to the King - Fuad at the time, succeeded by his son **King Faruq, last king of Egypt** (from family of Mohammed Ali). King nor parliament nor Constitution viewed as legitimate. Political leaders during interwar period reflected European values, and accused of imposing them in a liberal experiment labeled 'the attack upon tradition' (Islamic values diminished in favour of secularist European ideas ranging from Darwinism, Freudianism, socialism and feminism – based on European concepts of the 'rational' vs divinely inspired society). Caused severe cultural dislocation and alienation of population from political centre, dominated by the **Wafd** party.
6. Muslim Brotherhood, founded by school-teacher **Hassan al-Bannah in 1928**, it grew dramatically during 1930s, such that by onset of WWII, it had 500 branches

and membership in 10s of 1000s throughout Egypt. Combined traditional and innovative – using earlier ideas of **Mohammad Abduh** (Islamic modernist philosopher cleric) to find a marriage between tech advances of 20th century and Islamic commitment. Key concept: society should be governed through Shar'ia law, but it should be subject to interpretation *ijtihad*, to make it fully compatible with the needs of modern society. Hence – **his vision was for a new Islamic order** - of political harmony, economic well-being, social justice, social responsibility – not an Islamic state. **Al-Bannah called for local rather than foreign investment, land redistribution, social welfare programs.** Drew close to labour unions, and established enterprises in weaving, transportation, construction – granting worker shareholding rights in the companies. Also, to bridge gap between secular and religious communities, MB founded system of primary schools that combined training in modern tech skills and scientific methods – with religious instruction.

7. 1942 February 4th Incident: British give King Farouq ultimatum to take a pro-British Wafd PM. This permanently discredited Wafd, which could not escape the taint of taking power under the shadow of British forces. In effort to counter its dismal reputation, enacted several important reforms: **legalizing trade unions.**
8. And, in **March 1945, created the Arab League** as opportunity for Egypt to develop greater regional influence, (backed by British as tool to control wider region). HQ in Cairo, and usually directed by an Egyptian.
9. However, also reflected rising feeling of solidarity among Arab states, not least in response to threat of political Zionism now in their midst.

IV. **Iraq** during the War

1. Split in ruling elite between supporters of Britain, and supporters of independent sovereignty. King Faisal ruled skilfully with cabinet composed of old Ottoman .

But military gradually grew in power, with Army self-appointed guardian of nationalist ideals, . Irony: as Britain prepared for war against Nazi Germany, Iraq gripped by Fascist wave – paramilitary youth movements, etc. – and very anti-British

2. King Faisal died in 1933, succeeded by his inept son Ghazi, killed in car accident 1939, succeeded by 3-year-old son under regency of Nuri al-Said al Nuri, pro-British old-style Hashemite out of step with socialist-oriented military officers, Fascist-oriented leaders - forced to resign as War broke out.
3. Coup by Four Colonels with idea to free Iraq of British control, set Rashid Ali into the Premiership, sparking Rashidi Affair, basically Anglo-Iraqi War in 1941.
4. 1941 – armed confrontation , – Britain marches significant Middle East command through Palestine and Transjordan into Baghdad, and topples Four Colonels, putting Iraq under military occupation for rest of War. Al-Nuri, Faisal’s old vizier takes over power again –until 1958. But like Wafd in Egypt, is tarnished by taking power under shadow of British.

V. **Post WWII:** Independence and conflict. A brief review of several key states:

1. **Iraq. Under** nominal independence granted by British treaty in 1932 goes through little change at first– Britain retained military, communications and intelligence rights, two air-bases, and exclusive rights to train Iraqi military personnel and provide it arms. It also extracted highly beneficial oil agreement, to last 75 years.

2. **Jordan.** Philip Robins contends that ‘during the period 1918-1923, Transjordan¹ sat patiently in the waiting room of history’.² The Hashemites the first to promote Pan-Arabism in their play to create an Arab nation which they would head. Now Abdullah confined to small, dusty desert state.
- a) Granted independence in 1946. After the Jericho conference in December 1948, in the wake of ‘*Al-Nakba*’, a decision was made to unify the West and East Banks of the River Jordan, including Jerusalem, into a single state. At the time, half a million Palestinians had migrated into TransJordan, while 400,000 occupied the East Bank, adding almost 1 million new inhabitants to Jordan’s population. In 1948, Abdullah changed the name to Jordan, and pronounced himself King. He gave his new Palestinian subjects citizenship, and appointed several to his cabinet. In April 1950, elections were held and a Parliament emerged that included both Palestinian Arabs (West Bankers) and East Bankers equally.³ The purpose of the Act of Union, according to the official Jordanian position, was ‘to safeguard what was left of the Arab territory of Palestine from further Zionist expansion’,⁴ even though the unification was rejected by the Arab League.
- b) Palestinians, however, viewed Abdullah as an accomplice of the British, and held him responsible for the partition of their homeland.

3. Lebanon ‘born a schizophrenic state’

- a) Lebanon established by French General Gouraud, in 1920, with objective to safeguard Christian Maronite community and ensure it would not be absorbed

¹ Transjordan is the term referring to the country before its independence and metamorphosis into the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

² Philip Robins, “Jordan. Among Three Nationalisms,” in *Nation Building, State Building, and Economic Development*, ed. S.C.M Paine (New York: M.E Shape, 2010), 183.

³ “History: Unification of the Two Banks,” King Hussein bin Talal, accessed: May 16, 2011, http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/his_palestine.html#The Arab Legion and the Defense of Jerusalem.

⁴ Ibid.

into Syrian Muslim state. At the time, Maronites, primarily (but not exclusively) located on Mount Lebanon, the single largest religious community – though not a majority of population – instead, French ensured Muslim sections brought into the territory, so as to commit Maronites to French dependence to ensure their political dominance. However, Maronites viewed Lebanon as Christian homeland and enclave with a Franco-Med cultural orientation. Turned back on Arab world, and pointed to Europe.

- b) Arabs, brought into Lebanon not of their own volition, and wanting to be part of Syria, had different view. Other than Druze centered in the Shuf region, religious communities scattered (unlike in Syria or Iraq) in mosaic of side-by-side relationships.
- c) Likewise, religious and economic diversity of elites – unlike in Syria . Notables: Druze princes, Maronite merchants, Sunni landowners, rural leaders. Each operated on a clientelist basis, known as the *Za'im* system – representing not the interests of the greater community, but their own co-religionists and local populace.
- d) 1926 Constitution – based on the Ottoman era *mustasarrifiyah* – religious representation. Did not imply independence, nor accompanied by bilateral treaty between Lebanon and France. But, overall, easier transition during mandate period, as Maronites accepted French, making it less oppositional than Syria.
- e) Key need of Lebanon as new state: to find working relationship between Christian and Muslim communities. In 1937, a Christian, Emile Edde elected President, and he picked a Muslim, Khayr al-Din al Ahdab as Prime Minister, establishing principle of Pres. being Christian, PM being Sunni Muslim.

- f) Lebanon is a multi-confessional society and political life is organised along confessional lines. 1943, Under National Pact– an informal arrangement that endured up to the end of the 1980s – Christians and Muslims were represented in government in a ratio of 6:5 in favour of the Christian, predominantly Maronite community. Furthermore, certain senior governmental posts were awarded on a confessional basis: the president being a Maronite, the premier a Sunni Muslim and the speaker of the elected assembly a Shi'a. The system was modified but not fundamentally altered in the Taif accord in September 1989, after the Lebanese Civil War.

3. Syria

- a) Independence initially codified in a draft treaty in 1936, ratified by the Syrian parliament. But, in 1938, a change in government in France, refused to ratify treaty and instead, placed Syria under French control, dissolving parliament, suspending constitution, and establishing autonomy of Alawite and Druze states. France further offended Syria by giving Alexandretta to Turkey. Hence, with no principal local leaders, no institutions of government and no territorial integrity, independence again delayed. Even after 1943, when independence finally offered to Syria and Lebanon, and both elected strong anti-French govts., the French wouldn't depart and garrisons of French intervened even after the War terminated in Europe in 1945.
- b) **French form of rule: promoted social fragmentation of country**, failed to develop political, economic or social institutions. At time of independence,

Syria had no elites experienced in any form of governance, no bureaucracy linking the territory, no records upon which to base new budgets, planning, fledgling political parties linked to elites, and overall, was very anti-French.

II. The Western view of the region – remains important for two reasons:

security and energy:

a) With the gradual withdrawal of the imperial powers, the Middle East was increasingly viewed as a borderland containing the USSR. This was particularly the case with Iran and Turkey. The first case to come before the newly formed Security Council, for example, was the issue of Soviet withdrawal from Iran's northwestern province of Azerbaijan, while the Truman Doctrine was inspired by Soviet threats to Turkey's eastern border. Once again, the Middle East, because of its geo-strategic position, had become a surrogate area for great power conflict – in this instance, the region in which Cold War tensions were played out..

B) The Middle East represented the world's most important source of **energy**. At the dawn of World War II, oil was found in Saudi Arabia, and, in a momentous meeting on a ship in the middle of the Suez, Roosevelt assured Ibn-Saud that he would enjoy American protection of his independence in exchange for US access to Saudi oil—guaranteeing future American involvement in the Gulf. Across the water, the British were deeply entrenched in Iran for the same reason – and in Iraq. The Middle East remained valuable, not as a source of colonial power, but for its critical natural resources.

III. The modernization of the Arab world – the state, the military, the ideology – requires understanding of social organization prior to modernization

A) The political consequence of entering modernity in the Middle East – **a process that grew out of the emancipation from colonial to independent status**, involved a critical transition: going from what Durkheim called the **organic** society based on personal bonds and influence, what in Arabic is called *wasta* (or in North Africa, *piston*), to the **mechanical** society, in which the personal linkages of society are broken, and the individual relationship with the state becomes direct. Of course, this process never completely takes place. But if one looks at transition as the movement along a line from greater communalism to greater individualism, the end states achieved in the Middle East can be seen to developed roughly into two general forms:

- 1) states in which individually acquired citizenship has translated into a mechanical social structure of direct relationship between individual and state – such as in Morocco, Turkey, poss Jordan, and Israel;
- 2) states in which the individual is locked inside a system of social dependency and communalism, and where influence buying and peddling is the primary mechanism in the relationship between state and individual - such as in Lebanon, Syria, previously: Iraq and Libya.

B) Structurally, there were two important elements in the transition from traditional Islamic society to the modern relationship with the polity. In Islam, and as practiced by the Ottomans, the polity is **1) hierarchical, that is**, authority is delegated from the divine down to the community; **(thus, people are not sovereign, the divine is sovereign). However, 2) Just society within Islam must be consensual** – that is, a ruler should rule only by community consent – i.e. it is contractual, and symbolized by *Bay'a* – which means ‘handshake’ – and came to be represented by a non-institutionalized document issued by the community (its scholars, clerics, traders, etc.) that accepted the Sultan’s authority (the shadow of God on Earth) so long as he or his delegates met a series of conditions. The conditions reflected the Sultan’s obligation to guarantee the organization of society as consonant with the practice of Islam (if he did not, he was not reflecting the divine, and was liable to be replaced). To achieve the just society, the ruler or sultan was to **consult** with the community leaders. Thus, we see the roots of Islamic governance as based on divine sovereignty, practiced through consensus and consultation. The **implications of these two traditional practices were:**

- It established a **moral order alongside the political order**
- **The polity (that is, state structure) was less important than The ordering of society - that is establishing a society for the practice of Islam.**

C) The situation was complicated in practice, as social structures in **rural and urban** forms of organization were very different, although inter-linked through complex tribal relationships. The inter-linked process, called the Theory of the Circulation of Tribal Elites –was first developed by Ibn Khaldun, the world’s first sociologist, in the 14th century. Briefly:

- 1) **The rural** or *Badawi* social organization was based on kinship, often via the tribe. Thus, in the rural environment, people had a sense of **agnatic** (kin) solidarity – what in Arabic is called ‘*asabiya*’ – or shared blood.
- 2) In the context of the **Tribe** – which we can define as a unit which has a **presumed ancestor** from which everyone descends – the driving force is kinship – offering normal equality to each member. Tribes organized as **acephalous** – that is, they don’t have a leading figure in the hierarchical structure, there is **no single chief decider**, but instead, political issues are resolved as a function of consultation.
- 3) **However, the irony is this:** the process of consultation involves a patronage-clientage system. Thus, we have a **structural approach** (equality rather than hierarchy) combined with a **contractual** approach (patronage), both operating simultaneously. In other words, each man carries technically equal weight, but natural

leaders are chosen who make decisions in patronage-clientage form.

- 4) The tribal Middle East developed, therefore a **balancing technique**, called **sedimentary opposition**: this works against little hierarchies: you distrust those closest to you and choose allies at one remove. Thus, 'I against my brothers; I and my brothers against my cousins, I and my brothers and my cousins against the world.' **Implication**: This diffuses power, so the tribe becomes a self-regulating organization that resolves tensions through these two processes, and reinforces group identity.

D) The social structure of the Town, or *Madani* was built on urban guilds, and linked into Brotherhoods, or *Tarikas*. These were economic replicas of a social function, such as, for example, the Free Masons in Europe – that is, a social organization tied to trade that developed a separate structure and meaning. These were organized in two ways:

- 1) **As a local phenomenon**, which linked the town to the immediate hinterland and was based on mutual assurance of survival, ie through agricultural and basic trade;
- 2) **As a long-distance networking device** – between cities, creating a merchant class which was closely linked to the mosque system (the bazaar was usually located directly outside, or co-terminus with, the mosque).

3) Ibn Khaldun argues this has implications for the purity with which Islam is then practiced in the town as a determinant of social and political organization. It is in the town's religious institutions that the practice of Islam is re-interpreted through *ijtihad*. The rural tribal environment, on the other hand, is where Islam as a political doctrine retains its purity and vigour. Hence, the theory of the circulation of tribal elites, which attempts to explain the pattern of rural tribal elites rising up and replacing urban elites until they too get corrupted, and the circle repeats itself.

4) What this means: Inside traditional Islamic society, there are mediating functions that limited the centre, and which paralleled the civil society of the West, as set out by Locke, Hegel, and Marx. **This has important implications for Islamic social organization and democracy** – in that Islamic society created its own institutions limiting power. **This provides a context on which to build modernity.**

E) Now, we need to consider the consequence of the European experience in defining the modern state: as previously noted, a) the Europeans affected modern international borders where there had been none, and b) left, as perhaps one of their most important legacies, mechanisms of power that could be projected uniformly and homogeneously over the entire national territory, a significant

departure from all previous forms of power, which declined the farther away you moved from the centre. This of course was achieved through the system of roads, transportation, policing, communications, etc. that were spread by modern technology equally across the state. This gave rise to **collective consciousness, and ideology** becomes an important component **in defining national identity. The implications:**

- 1) **Nationalism** – a very European concept, is adopted to **define the nations now needed to inhabit the territories** described by the new borders delineating different states.
- 2) **Citizenship** emerges as a relationship between individual and state, very different from the membership concept of community based around Islamic precept and practice.
- 3) **Civil society** is defined as autonomous association outside the control of the state, but in forms that now differ from the traditional structures of tribe and guild.

F) How did these new organizational movements meld with traditional paradigms as states sought to acquire definition, identity and nationhood? Although we shall discuss identity more thoroughly in a later lecture, particularly in regards to Political Islam, a critical **quandary faced the creation of nationhood in the Arab world** in regards to identity, one that still haunts and affects the states of the region today: **identities created among the populace** were not

terribly appropriate for the creation of a national identity. Existing **identities were either too small, or too large**, for the purposes of statehood. The people in the Arab world emerging from the Ottoman empire and colonial period had the following two large, and in a real sense, indivisible identities:

- 1) **Islamic** – being a part of the larger community or *ummah*, which became, in modern parlance, ***ummiya*, the Muslim space**, the bounded world dominated by the ideology of Islam. Associated with this: *Towhid*.
- 2) **Ethnic – Arab**, which included shared linguistic, historical and cultural attributes, and which often over-rode religious distinctions. This, in Arabic, became linked to the term tribe, or *qawm*, and assumed the new form, ***qawmiya*, or cultural nationalism**.
- 3) **The third** important element of identity had, at the time of independence both a large aspect, but also very small aspects: namely, the concept of ***watan*, homeland, which became *wataniya*, or patriotism**. In effect, Arabs could define *watan* as the entirety of the Arab territorial legacy, but, they could also define it in very small locational terms – as tribal lands, as regions inside or across border lines, as urban areas, etc.

G) As states attained independence and sought a national ideology to justify the state – and establish what Benedict Arnold called the

national imaginary, **the problem** they encountered was how to define identity if the tools at their disposal were either too large, or too small, for the purpose of nation-building. In other words, they faced two significant problems:

- 1) **Alternative identities existed that linked them to the larger Islamic world (ummiya) and the shared Arabic language and culture (qawmiya).**
- 2) **It was not clear what they were constructing.** A nation state (bottom up) or a state nation (top down) (a German concept of artificial identity). In fact, it was generally the latter.

II. Concepts of Governance

Let's again turn to a **definition: what is governance?** From a **Western perspective, it refers to the state and can be defined as a legitimate, participatory political process, in which the state (according to Weber) monopolizes the legitimate use of force, and is answerable to its constituents.** From a **Muslim perspective** on the other hand, **it is a system of creating social justice and legitimate institutions designed to enable the practice of Islam. In the former, it refers to the polity. In the latter, it refers to society.**

Yet both processes – the creation of legitimate polities and the creation of legitimate modern societies - fail. Why?

- 1) The conventional answer is to see it as a consequence of colonialism and modernization, which was to create **weak, fierce states based on the army (for example Syria, or Iraq), or shadow states** based on the intelligence or security apparatus (Libya, Saudi) - - what in Arabic is called the *mahabarāt*.
- B) An alternative view blames the persistence of traditional structures manipulating more powerful state structures (certainly an issue in the current situation in Maliki's Iraq).
- C) A third argument places the fault on external factors: 1) The Arab-Israeli dispute; 2) The Cold War; 3) The import of alien ideologies (fascism, communism, democracy, the Washington consensus- things that don't fit!); 4) persistence of outside intervention.
- 2) An entirely different explanation would see those as **excuses or partial answers**. Instead it can be argued: It is not an instant process. Legitimate governance, modern institution-building, political education and identity - take time to develop - and go through cycles in development.
- A) Traditional societies are under massive pressure to modernize and globalize in a matter of decades** - what took the EU centuries, the US a civil war. Failure at the initial stages likely and with unexpected turns;
- B) The states were born in conflict, affecting the nature of state political culture (remember, many of the states are an imperial**

imposition in the ME): this goes to the heart of the Weber-based view of states as the entity with the **monopoly on the legitimate use of force**. Prior to state-creation, force was distributed (tribes). Emplacement of states as institutions gives states (centralized, militarized institutions) the power to be violent.

C) The balancing face of this concept comes from Hegel, who argues that states must be the actuality of the **ethical idea**. The claim here is that because states are violent and coercive, they require **legitimization by society**. This latter depends on how society contributes to governance. ie: i) power at the centre should be limited; ii) the state must guarantee private property, iii) in return for taxation, the population has a right to be consulted and to participate in governance.

As already noted, all three are inherent in the Islamic social concept: i) the hierarchical precept of governance of the divine (limits rights of the elites, the centre); ii) the contract between population and religious leader (guaranteed through private property); iii) governance that must be consonant with religious practice and principle (consultation and consensus).

3) Problem: 1) The colonial legacy of centralizing power in elite hands – expanded the *iqta* or feudal system of absentee landlords; 2) thus, the state lost control of taxation, relied on military legitimacy.

This legacy created an entrenched, unlimited elite structure inside the state, undermining the social, contractual participation of the populace in government, and negating the criterion of consultation or tribal balancing.. Further, the hierarchical nature of the state allowed for repression to avoid disorder, based on the concept of *fitna*

4) The result: The state was defined (including its political identity) – not according to its relationship to divinity and the community, but, according to imposed sovereignty and military control over territory. This created the conditions in which state polities, and societies, could fail.

II) Now we need to create a typology of the emerging Middle East state.

There were two broad kinds:

a) Modernist – a post- colonial creation in which the state is constructed or reconstructed, dominated by the army bringing order, and instrumentalized through a holistic, nationalist ideology to legitimate itself and stamp out dissent (a totalistic ideology calls everyone to serve according to what the state determines is the ‘right’ way). Importantly the military is initially a venerated, homogenizing force that inculcated modern ideas of social organization and education. Further, it is a wielder of technological power, and if we consider that state power is the force to organize the polity, the military was among the few

institutions already set up, well-funded, and commanding widespread legitimacy in these new polities, unique in its ability to achieve state security, organization and other forms of power. Additionally, in the post-Mandate period, many military academies popularized – resulting in army officer corps composed of poorer, more ‘socially representative’ members of society, thus trusted as different from previously imposed Europeans or colonial elites.

The launching of modernist states was accompanied by constitution-writing. Most were adapted from European templates – French, Belgian – which failed to reflect the particularist realities inside ME societies, and were ill-constructed to develop mass political culture, failing to protect free speech and media, or to introduce concepts of civic responsibility into education systems bent on establishing mass literacy. Often, the structure created unwieldy party fragmentation, e.g. Turkey.... .

b) Traditionalist/Monarchist. This used pre-existing political structures, modified by colonialism, to construct monarchies, several in places that had never had hereditary kingship, such as Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq. Indeed, inherited monarchies – (*molk or malek*) were in many places alien, where the concept of *sulta* was more common, meaning power which is ‘articulated’. What colonialism did was to freeze class structures into permanence, and enable the elite as it existed, to inherit the state. These were

traditional, often tribal, which mobilized loyalties according to existing patterns, and operated on a normative definition of public space

- c) The irony is that both traditionalist and modernist states shared common features:** (parallels between Egypt and Saudi, or Morocco and Algeria). Why? a) The political and economic elite ran the state (e.g. in Qatar the al Thanis; in Syria, the absentee landlords, until replaced by the military, with the eventual takeover by the Alawite minority of Al-Assad).
- d)** Both systems were **repressive**, because they lacked popular legitimation. In Egypt, the military replaced the monarchy, leading to rise of Nasser, then Sadat, and finally Mubarak without real popular election. In Saudi Arabia, the Saud's retain power in a clandestine monarchy dependent on security systems and collaboration with the Wahabi ulema.
- e)** In economic terms, the elites in both instances are **rent-seeking** – that is, trying to capture the income of the state for private use. 1) neo-prebendal;(prebendalism is a term used when the Church or Mosque has income attached to it, which becomes a source of opportunism). If the state depends on rent (Canal dues in Egypt, remittances from immigrants in Turkey and Morocco, oil in Iraq, etc.), the elites capture the rents; and in effect, the entire region is rent-dependent, since oil aid becomes rent to those states lacking

oil (Jordan, Egypt); 2) In parallel to neo-prebendalism, there neo-patrimonialism – wealth accretion, contracts, benefits, etc. are distributed from the centre through elite networks – each individual dependent on who they know and what services can be gained from them. Hence, the universality of *wasta* or influence in all the states. 3) The structure of the state comes to reflect the sourcing and distribution of funding – ie, top-down, centrally managed, public investment directed, personalistic (charismatic), with low entrepreneurial or private sector activity; and the people carry no value (offering no contribution to state income through taxes, no input on decision-making, a cost center, rather than income center – Algeria, and any of the GCC. 4) Finally, all the states legitimate themselves through some manipulation of outside threat (Arab Israeli dispute (Egypt), transnational violence (Tunisia, Libya), Westernization (Iran, Saudi), etc.)

III) In the modernist states, such as Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Turkey, the military had difficulty constructing effective forms of citizenship, the modern concept behind statehood. Instead, the military managed society through repression and coercion, with elections being sporadic, constitutions frequently rewritten, and transitions in power undertaken through coups, rather than through peaceful political hand-overs. In Turkey, for example, elected prime

ministers were regularly taken out of office by the military, some because they aspired to dictatorship, others because the political or economic framework was so ill-constructed that governance was definitionally incompetent (e.g. party politics fragmented representation into so many factions that minority parties determined who held power, leading to corruption and influence manipulation). For whatever reason, this left the military to run the government un-hindered and often with brutality, until it again proffered elections. Citizenship was thus answerable to the arbitrary nature of the centre, or to be fought for through strikes, demonstrations, terrorist acts – all of which occurred in serial fashion in Turkey in the 50s, 60s, and 80s.

IV) However, citizenship denies the use of repression since it vests the obligation of the state to treat all citizens in a disinterested fashion. **The result:** The state looked for justification in ideology, not democracy.

1. Here, the militaries reflected the experience of their young officers, drawn not from the elite but from the lower middle classes, who had been exposed, in the newly established military academies in Cairo, Damascus and Tehran, to ideas contained in European holistic ideologies - communism, socialism, and fascism. Aspects of these ideologies were then combined into new, complex, nationalistic, indeed 'revolutionary' brews laced with traditional cultural symbols,

such as Kamalism, Ba'athism, and Nasserism. In the post-colonial period, political Islam was not a strong contender, the focus being to adopt secular, modern practices; although Islam lurked always in the background.

2. **Thus**, the first military coup in the post-War Middle East takes place in **Syria in 1949, espousing Marxism**, and then, Ba'athism.
3. But it was in **Egypt, with the coup by the Free Officers movement in 1952**, that the model was set. Initially, the Free Officers did not ascribe to a strong ideology, and only later called their platform a 'revolution'. Their initial purpose was to rid Egypt of the corruption and British-dependent dynastic vestiges of the Mohammad Ali Khedivate, which they blamed for having lost the 1948 War with Israel through lack of planning, investment and training. In effect, their initial platform was an expression of the need for new governance in response to the Arab-Israel confrontation. Yet, Nasserism – combining pan-Arabism, nationalism, and socialist central planning - soon emerged to infuse the country, and the region, with a new Arab ideology and economic platform – the building of the Aswan Dam, the takeover of the Suez Canal. With the emergence of Gamal Abd al-Nasser as its leader, Egypt became the cornerstone of the era. Although Syria called itself the 'beating heart of the Arab nation', and attempted nine schemes in less than 20 years to unite with other countries in the region in a concrete expression of pan-

Arabism, it was Nasser's Egypt that provided both the ideology and military template for the Arab world.

4. However, Nasserism suffocated opposition, banning the Muslim Brotherhood and other political parties, and reducing political participation for the sake of rallying around a single modernizing vision.
- V) Coups followed in Iraq, and serially in Syria, where Ba'athism took hold, and then mutated; in the former, becoming a nationalist corporatist ideology, in the latter remaining more socialist. Both became fierce states, dependent on the security and intelligence services to cow the population, institutionalize the military within the social-economic structures of government, and funnel investment – usually into large industrial projects that failed to produce employment and suffered from waste and global competition.

III. In reviewing these typologies, it becomes clear, that all the outcomes were repressive. Why? What were the primary threats to the Middle East States?

1) Inefficiency. Almost across the board, the Middle East states that emerged were inefficient – they didn't, and don't work. The militaries, initially the harbingers of change and reflection of youthful aspirations, stultified, aged, and developed few mechanisms to continue with the pace of practical and ideological adjustment. The same can be said for many of

the monarchies, three of which (Qatar, Oman, and Abu Dhabi) had coups by the sons to oust aging kings.

3) No formula for change. Ghassam Salame notes in *Democracies without Democrats*, there were no institutions for change outside the government – thus it was only the government, with its entrenched elites, that could invite democratic adjustment – a non-starter until the effects of the Arab Spring. The exceptions were Turkey, and Israel, where economies were more vibrant, and the electoral process, though flawed in both cases, created openings for new faces, and new approaches – and where crucially, the government depended upon taxation. In Iran, by contrast, revolution created abrupt changes to the system.

4) Faulty Institutions: Further, they were plagued by faulty institutions—politically, socially, and economically. **As the states emerged from colonialism**, most were still economically dependent on their mandatory masters – Syria on France, Iraq on Britain, Iran, because of its oil, also on Britain, Lebanon and Algeria on France, Libya on Italy, etc. The trade linkages with Europe have remained over the ensuing decades stronger than inter-regionally. Likewise, the institutions set up were largely periphery institutions to those in Europe, and remained so with the spread of rentierism throughout the region, as state economies moved from colonialism to ones dominated by oil (or oil-based aid, remittances, tourism and Canal dues). Finally, the incorporation of the citizenry into the state remained fragile, both economically, where

taxation remained underdeveloped, and socially, in that traditional Islamic and tribal structures were ineffectively melded with modern military and commercial structures. Instead, many of the institutions were hollowed out – as we saw in Libya, and Tunisia, where the military is taken over by a charismatic leadership that saps the government of any purpose or role, creating instead a shadow state.

5) Ideological competition – in both monarchical and modernist states, the greatest threat is perceived in an alternative political ideology – Marxism, political Islam etc. This has mutated over time, as the Soviet Union collapsed, and new ideologies emerged, but it remains the justification for repression and reduction in civil rights: in Iran, the threat in the '50s was Marxism and nationalism, today in both Syria and Iran, it is from democracy. Israel faces ideological competition from internal challenges to its definition as a Zionist state. Algeria, faces challenges from political Islam; Lebanon from the Shia ideology of Hezbollah. In all cases, their credibility and viability of the state are at some level being questioned – a point we will expand on further in our lecture on identity and nationalism.