FOOD SECURITY IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS: THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

Teachers: Eckart Woertz
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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Eckart Woertz is senior research fellow at CIDOB, the Barcelona Centre for International Affairs and scientific advisor to the Kuwait Chair at Sciences Po in Paris. Formerly he was a visiting fellow at Princeton University, director of economic studies at the Gulf Research Center in Dubai and worked for banks in Germany and the United Arab Emirates. He teaches at the Barcelona Institute of International Studies (IBEI) and was KSP visiting professor at the Paris School of International Affairs (PSIA) at Sciences Po. He is author of Oil for Food (Oxford University Press 2013), editor of GCC Financial Markets (Gerlach Press 2012) and has published numerous journal articles on development issues in the Middle East. He is on the editorial boards of Food Security and the Journal of Arabian Studies and holds a PhD in economics from Friedrich-Alexander University, Erlangen-Nuremberg.

COURSE OUTLINE


- What happened: Supply and demand factors (e.g. biofuels, population growth, agricultural productivity, climate change)
- Food markets and food security (not everybody pays world market prices, role of subsidies, tariffs and financial markets)
- Consequences: Agro investments/ land grabs, international initiatives (e.g. FAO, IFAD, WB, G8), national initiatives (e.g. strategic storage)
- Effects in the Middle East

Required readings:
Further reading:
- For statistical work of your own check the website of the US Department of Agriculture:: [http://www.fas.usda.gov/psdonline/psdQuery.aspx](http://www.fas.usda.gov/psdonline/psdQuery.aspx)

Session 2: The Concept of Food Security and its History

- Malthus vs. agricultural productivity
- Market liberalism and Late Victorian Holocausts
- WWII, “Freedom from Want” (Roosevelt) and establishment of FAO
- Green Revolution
- Amartya Sen: food accessibility, entitlements and famines
- Nutrition: Micronutritional vs. calorie deficiencies
- Food security and wider economic development: Millennium Development Goals

Required readings:

Further reading:

Session 3 The Battle for the Future of Farming

- The Green Revolution: pros and cons
- The controversy about Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)
- Agribusiness value chains and social conflict
- Arguments for Organic and Small-scale Farming
- Pitfalls of meatification
Required readings:


Further reading:


Session 4: Food Regime Theory

- Food regimes: 1870-1930s (settler states supplying centers), 1945-1970s (surplus disposal by centers), 1970s-? (supermaketization and financialization or business as usual?)
- The global food crisis of the 1970s as a turning point?
- Position of the Middle East in Global Food Systems

Required readings:


Further reading:

- Rothschild, Emma. "Food Politics." *Foreign Affairs* (January 1976)
Session 5: History of Middle East Agriculture 1800-1945

- Integration of the Middle East in a capitalist world market via export crops like cotton, tobacco, silk and opium
- Emergence of landed classes in Egypt, Syria and Iraq
- Technological innovation and transport infrastructure
- Comparison with other world regions

**Required readings:**

**Further reading:**

Session 6: The Age of Land Reform: Egypt, Syria, Iran and Iraq

- Land tenure and social conflict
- Land reform and political mobilization
- Agriculture and the development strategy of import substituting industrialization
- Comparison with land reforms elsewhere: e.g. China, Vietnam, Cuba, Mexico

**Required readings:**

**Further reading:**
Session 7: The “Food Weapon”: Food and Geopolitics

- Food embargos and export restrictions as a means of warfare and as a foreign policy tool
- The Food for Peace program of the US and how it was used in the Middle East
- The Iraqi Oil for Food program

Required readings:

Further reading:

Session 8: The Sudan Bread Basket Strategy of Gulf Countries in the 1970s

- Surplus, Cotton and Statehood: Economic development in Sudan 1850-1950
- Failed modernization under Nimeiri and Gulf agro-investments in the 1970s
- Causes of famine (1984/85)
- “Agricultural Renaissance” and dam building in the 2000's
Required readings:

Further reading:

Session 9: Self-Sufficiency Fata Morganas and Structural Adjustment: Saudi Arabia, Iran, Syria, Egypt

• Programs for wheat self-sufficiency out of strategic concerns
• Agro-lobbies and structural adjustment
• Water scarcity and impact of climate change

Required readings:

Further reading:

Session 10: Hydropolitics: Nile Basin, Mesopotamia (Turkey, Iraq, Syria) and Jordan Valley

• The concepts of virtual water and hydro hegemony
COURSE OUTLINE

- Hydropolitics and international relations
- Surface water and the problem of groundwater depletion

Required readings:

Further reading:

Session 11: Patterns of Agricultural Expansion: Africa as New Frontier?

- Patterns of agricultural expansion, historically, geographically and by investor type
- Position of Africa in the global food system
- Issues of equitability in foreign agro-investments

Required readings:

Further Reading:
Session 12: Foreign Agro Investments: Neocolonial “Landgrab” or Win-Win Situation?

- Overview of land grabs and investment trends
- Detailed look at the Gulf countries and their motivations
- Alternative approaches

Required readings:
- Eckart Woertz, Oil for Food. The Global Food Crisis and the Middle East (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press 2013) ch. 7 and 8

Further reading: