



# Model Arab League

## Annotated Bibliography for Kuwait

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This annotated bibliography was created to serve as a research resource for students taking part in the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations' Model Arab League Program. With the understanding that research can be intimidating and time consuming, an effort was made to find a set of scholarly articles that give a detailed background and thorough account of the current situation for this League of Arab States member. Included are annotations designed to give a description of the source with the intention of students completing the research on their own. There has been an attempt to focus on more contemporary scholarship, specifically post-9/11 and post-2011 (so-called "Arab Spring") where possible, as these are two phenomena that fundamentally changed politics in the Arab world. These sources should provide students with a solid basis for understanding the country they are representing in both regionally and globally significant issues as well as the interests of other countries within the League of Arab States.

1. Katherine Meyer, Helen Rizzo, and Yousef Ali, "Changed Political Attitudes in the Middle East: The Case of Kuwait," *International Sociology*, Volume 22, Number 3, June 2007, pp. 289-324. •• Many Americans may assume that following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and subsequent liberation by U.S. forces, Kuwaitis would have an extremely favorable view of America and its citizens. This opinion makes a rather large assumption however and does not factor in the various other political spheres and identities present in Kuwaiti society, namely those of the wider Arab world, the Arab Gulf, and both Sunni and Shi'a Muslim. This article examines survey data taken over a number of years after 1991 regarding Kuwaiti peoples' political and religious views and the changes they experienced over time. The authors show that in response to various decisive events, Kuwaiti religio-political viewpoints changed significantly in periods as short as four years. From the data and findings, the reader is given a thorough idea of Kuwait's interests in terms of international political maneuvering.
2. Nawaf Al-Mutairi, Arun Joshi, Osama Nour-Eldin, Ashok K. Sharma, Ibtesam El-Adawy, and Manish Rijhwani, "Clinical Patterns of Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Associated Sociodemographic Characteristics, and Sexual Practices in the Farwaniya Region of Kuwait," *International Journal of Dermatology*, Volume 46, Number 6, 2007, pp. 594-599. •• Often considered a difficult subject to talk about, this clinical report reveals rates of STD infections among Kuwaitis. Notable findings include the main sources of STD transmittal, the frequency and regularity of use of protective measures, and the trends of STD healthcare provision moving away from centralized hospitals to local clinics. Finally, the authors advocate for a more thorough monitoring system, largely due to the diffusion of health care facilities.
3. Abdalla Al-Zamel, Mohaniniad Al-Sarawi, and Sawsan Khader, "Coastal Geomorphology, Hydrodynamics, and Biolithofacie in the Intertidal and Subtidal Areas

of Umm Al-Namil Island, Kuwait Bay, Kuwait,” *Journal of Coastal Research*, Volume 23, Issue 2, March 2007, pp. 501-514. •• As the phenomenon of climate change alters landscapes, stable relationships between people and the land they inhabit may begin to change at a more rapid pace than they can cope. Kuwait (like many other Arab countries) has very good reason to be concerned not only about changes to local geography and ecosystems, but the global environment as well. This scientific report surveys the geographic changes of one island off the coast of Kuwait, finding evidence of erosion among other damaging processes. Importantly, the biodiversity on and around this island consist of mainly niche species dependent on specific conditions of sand grain size and hydrodynamics. This delicate balance is likely threatened by both local and global environmental alterations.

4. Laila A. al-Omran and C. V. N. Rao, “Hydrocarbons in the Intertidal Areas of Kuwait,” *International Journal of Environmental Studies*, Volume 53, Issue 1-2, April 1996, pp. 31-41. •• Kuwait’s intertidal region is suffering increasing degradation in proportion with increases in human activity. Further damage has come in shock events, like during the Gulf War when large amounts of oil were spilled into the marine environment and falling ash from burning oil wells polluted the waters. Data for hydrocarbon levels in Kuwait’s intertidal waters is presented by graphs showing high levels that certainly affect marine life negatively. This article reveals the effects of war on the environment, a sector which is rarely considered in the context of disputing states.
5. Alexander Nicoll and Jessica Delaney, “Kuwait’s Deepening Political Turmoil,” *Strategic Comments*, Volume 19, Number 2, March 2013, pp. 11-13. •• In the wake of the so-called Arab Spring, all Arab governments were scrambling to react to the political demands of their citizens. Kuwait was already a relatively open country in terms of political freedoms, however this openness may be at risk due to the widespread protests taking place in Kuwait’s urban centers. This detailed analysis of Kuwait’s reaction to Arab Spring uprisings gives the reader insight into the inner workings of Kuwaiti government and how it has attempted to appease demonstrators with reforms, cabinet purges, and youth dialogues.
6. Mary Ann Tetreault, “Autonomy, Necessity, and the Small State: Ruling Kuwait in the Twentieth Century,” *International Organization*, Volume 45, Number 4, Autumn, 1991, pp. 565-591. •• Kuwait occupies a precarious political space: that of a small state with oil wealth surrounded by larger and more powerful countries. Originally of strategic value as a port only, the Ottoman Empire sought to control Kuwait and wanted to build a Berlin-Baghdad railway that would terminate in Kuwait. This caught the attention of the West, specifically Britain, which determined the railway would challenge British interests in the region. A government favorable to British imperialism emerged in Kuwait, creating a

political “cliency” relationship between the two governments wherein the Kuwaitis supplied oil in exchange for security. This article explains this history in depth, following succession of rulers, changes in political alliances, and the use of oil exports for political power up to contemporary times. The authors conclude that given Kuwait’s geopolitical position, it must depend on foreign protectorates.

7. Anh Nga Longva, “The Apostasy Law in Kuwait and the Liberal Predicament,” *Cultural Dynamics*, Volume 14, Number 3, November 2002, pp. 257-282. •• Almost all Americans will approach religion from a Western liberal perspective, that is, one which includes separation of church and state, religion as a private matter, and freedom to choose and change one’s religious affiliation. In many Arab Muslim countries, this is not the case, as laws in their constitutions borrow from Islamic jurisprudence and make conversion (also known as apostasy) illegal. Kuwait is one of these countries, and this article describes a case of apostasy in depth along with interviews and personal reactions from Kuwaitis. Interesting here is the finding that the Kuwaitis are not upset so much about the person’s choice to convert or his beliefs, but the public manner in which he carried it out, seen by Kuwaitis as spitefully attempting to undermine their sense of community.
8. Juliet Dinkha and Mourad Dakhli, “Perceived Discrimination in the Arabian Gulf: The Case of Migrant Labor in Kuwait,” *Psychology Journal*, Volume 6, Number 2, June 2009, pp. 47-59. •• Kuwait (like many other Gulf countries) is heavily dependent on migrant labor, especially from Southeast Asia. These migrant workers actually outnumber Kuwaiti citizens and primarily work in unskilled or housekeeper/maid type positions. Just as in Western countries that import migrant laborers for manual labor jobs, Kuwait has trouble preventing discrimination against these workers. This may stem from the fact that the migrant laborers work for lower wages than native Kuwaitis and laws make it difficult to fire Kuwaitis once they are hired. This creates tensions between Kuwaiti citizens and the migrant laborers who may be seen as taking jobs from natives. This article explains the economic disparities between the various populations present in Kuwait and in so doing gives the reader a look at the demographic makeup of the modern country.
9. F. M. Al-Ruwaih and J. Almedeij, “The Future Sustainability of Water Supply in Kuwait,” *Water International*, Volume 32, Issue 4, December 2007, pp. 604-617. •• Increasingly, accessibility to water is becoming difficult in Arab countries whose climate and landscape are predominantly characterized as desert. Along with increasing population growth and development in the past 50 years, Kuwait’s per capita water consumption has increased to one of the highest in the world. According to this article, draw from aquifers exceeds their replenishment and evaporation vastly exceeds rainfall in

Kuwait. Because of these unsustainable processes, Kuwait has relied heavily on water desalination which is still a relatively expensive way to make potable water. Recently, the government has begun to invest in and promote grey-water treatment as an alternative and possible economically viable means to satisfying Kuwait's water needs.

10. Ali A. Dashti and Salah al-Fadhli, "The Impact of Online Journalism on the Freedom of the Press: A Case Study of Kuwait," *International Journal of Instructional Media*, Volume 38, Number 1, 2011, pp. 47-58. •• The advent of the internet changed many things throughout the world and had an intensified effect on freedom of information. In Arab countries, journalists have historically been faced with restrictive censorship laws when compared with Western print media, a paradigm that was challenged when the internet arrived. Some have argued that developing countries were/are not concerned with the Western concept of press freedom. However, as this article shows, Kuwaiti journalists (at least) see the internet and online publishing favorably as tools of empowerment and freedom. Specifically, surveys of Kuwaiti journalists reveal that they mostly think of internet reporting and/or blogging as confirming the accuracy of news stories with independent corroboration.
11. Deborah L. Wheeler, "The Internet and Public Culture in Kuwait," *International Communication Gazette*, Volume 63, Number 2-3, May 2001, pp. 187-201. •• Among the aspects of life (along with freedom of information) that the internet has changed are personal interactions. This is especially true in the Arab Middle East, wherein interactions between members of the opposite sex have historically been strictly governed by older family members. Kuwaiti youth are increasingly making use of the internet to interact with members of the opposite sex outside of cultural guidelines, and this is proving to be divisive among age groups. One story in this article describes a Sunni/Shi'a couple who met over the internet, fell in love, and got married despite their families' misgivings. Kuwait is faced with a dilemma: it simultaneously wants to modernize its country and infrastructure, but elements within the society feel that push is fundamentally changing the culture and at too fast a pace.
12. M. A. Darwish, Fatimah M. Al Awadhi, "The Need for Integrated Water Management in Kuwait," *Desalination and Water Treatment*, Volume 11, Issue 1-3, 2009, pp. 204-214. •• Kuwait, being one of the poorest countries in terms of water resources is also one of the highest in terms of its use. This may be due to unrealistically low prices for water coupled with lack of awareness about the actual quantity used and needed in Kuwait. Because of the high demand and very limited availability of ground water in Kuwait, the country has relied predominantly on desalination of sea water (93%). This article advocates for Kuwait to transition away from desalination of sea water because it is expensive and requires burning fuel to boil the water. Waste water and/or grey water is

appearing to be a much more reasonable source of potable water for Kuwait due to its relative cost to desalinized water.

13. Sean L. Yom, "Oil, Coalitions, and Regime Durability: the Origins and Persistence of Popular Rentierism in Kuwait," *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Volume 46, Number 2, June 2011, pp. 217-241. •• Wealth in natural resources, and in the case of the Arab gulf, oil, has tended to create dominant state-citizen relationships. These relationships often manifest themselves in a sort of authoritarian rentierism, wherein the government maintains power by heavily favoring an elite group by protecting and funding them from oil export revenues. Kuwait is different however, in that the state was experiencing turmoil prior to the discovery of oil and its becoming a commodity of extreme value. Therefore, a Kuwaiti political culture of inclusion became the norm, before authoritarian tendencies took hold. The authors argue that rentierism, at least in the Kuwaiti context, is not always a bad thing, and can become beneficial in the form of "popular rentierism."
14. Khadija El-Hammami, Ola Samir, Soania Kettaneh, Athari Al-Fadli, and Lukman Thalib, "Use of and Attitudes and Knowledge about Pap Smears among Women in Kuwait," *Journal of Women's Health*, Volume 18, Number 11, November 2009, pp. 1825-1832. •• As countries become more developed, quality of healthcare becomes an increasingly important concern. As medical knowledge and technology become more widely available in these countries, simple procedures like pap tests can predict and prevent cancerous cells from becoming malignant, however they have yet to implement adequate screening programs. In the case of Kuwait, cultural issues as well as levels of education factor into this lack of critical healthcare implementation. This article shows that there is a dire need for educational programs that convey the benefits of reproductive health care. There is also a severe deficit of female health care providers, which acts as a cultural block for women who need basic reproductive health care.
15. Lubna Al-Kazi, "Women and non-Governmental Organizations in Kuwait: A Platform for Human Resource Development and Social Change," *Human Resource Development International*, Volume 14, Issue 2, April 2011, pp. 167-181. •• It is easy for Westerners to point fingers at Arab countries and accuse them of oppressing women through social, legal, and religious constructs. This allegation does not account for many of these countries' very recent and rapid development, and the relatively new concept of women's rights in a global historical context. In response to globalization and modernization, many Arab states experienced counter-movements, often under the guise of Islam. This article shows that in Kuwait, these opposition groups were in fact motivated by the challenge development posed to patriarchal norms by increasing Kuwaiti women's roles in public and economic life. Using an array of statistical data showing literacy rates and

participation in various economic sectors, this article shows how women's NGO's in Kuwait are making significant changes to legal and social norms in a country whose standards were established at a time when women's literacy and political participation were next to zero.

16. Suaad Alshebou, "The Benefits of Adult Learning: Continuing Education and the Development Process in the State of Kuwait," *College Student Journal*, Volume 44, Issue 4, December 2010, pp. 860-877. •• As Gulf countries continue to develop, citizens demand higher standards of quality of education. Kuwait has attempted to respond to this need by creating Continuing Education (CE) programs for adult learners wishing to increase their knowledge and skills of needed fields. Surprisingly, this study found that respondents taking part in Kuwait's CE programs felt they were getting more social benefit out of them than economic benefit. That is, participants reported that CE gave them higher levels of tolerance and wider social networks, and did not satisfy them in terms of increased productivity. On the one hand, this shows that CE in Kuwait is beneficial by improving the social cohesion of the country. On the other, this shows a failing of CE based on its stated goals. This article explains the problem CE in Kuwait is facing and proposes solutions, like increasing the credibility of CE certificates and public knowledge of CE programs.
17. Tawfic E. Farah, "Political Culture and Development in a Rentier State: The Case of Kuwait," *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Volume 24, Issue 1, January-April 1989, pp. 106-113. •• Kuwait is simultaneously very similar but very different than other oil rich Gulf states. Despite creating a rentier state following the discovery of oil Kuwait's rentierism benefitted the elites as well as the lower classes. This short article demonstrates how the ruling al-Sabah family navigated the ground between a political system and a political culture, and argues that Kuwaitis, while aware of some disparities, largely feel that they are better off because of the government's policies.
18. Faiza Al-Yamani, Maria Saburova, and Igor Polikarpov, "A Preliminary Assessment of Harmful Algal Blooms in Kuwait's Marine Environment," *Aquatic Ecosystem Health & Management*, Volume 15, Supplement 1, June 2012, pp. 64-72. •• Recently, environmental problems have begun to be recorded and studied in Kuwait. This may have been prompted by the successive Red Tide incidents in Kuwait since May 1997, causing a "massive fish kill" and costing nearly \$10 million each time. Beyond the immediate effect of the fish kill, algal blooms can cause long lasting health problems in humans as well. This study speculates that these blooms may be caused by dumping of sewage and other waste into the gulf, and makes numerous recommendations for the future to facilitate study and possible prevention of future algal blooms.

19. Ahmad Al-Dousari, Abdul Nabi Al-Ghadban, and Neil C. Sturchio, "Marine Environmental Impacts of Power-Desalination Plants in Kuwait," *Aquatic Ecosystem Health & Management*, Volume 15, Supplement 1, June 2012, pp. 50-55. •• As fresh water becomes more scarce and Kuwait relies more heavily on desalination of sea water for its drinking water, the local environment will inevitably be affected. Because Kuwait's desalination plants use the flash desalination method, the plants discharge heated water into the ocean after distillation. In addition, the water tanks need to be cleaned regularly due to lime scale buildup, and the waste of the cleaning contains harmful chemicals. This report details the environmental impacts of sea water desalination and makes recommendations for decreasing the negative consequences.