



# The Political Economy of Iraq: Restoring Balance in a Post-Conflict Society

By Frank R. Gunter

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This groundbreaking volume offers a comprehensive look at the current state of Iraq's political economy in the aftermath of the US-led overthrow of Saddam Hussein in 2003. Frank R. Gunter describes the unique difficulties facing the modern Iraqi economy and provides detailed recommendations for fostering future economic growth and stability.

The book begins with an overview of Iraq's current political, economic, and social status, including discussions of real growth, unemployment, inflation, health, poverty, education, and gender issues. This is followed by a comprehensive look at what the author identifies as the three dominant characteristics of the political economy of Iraq: corruption, political instability, and petroleum. Using these foundational ideas as a springboard, the book then provides a detailed breakdown of the Iraqi economy by sector, as well as discussions of Iraq's fiscal, monetary, and exchange rate policies. The final chapter identifies the major trends that will determine the course of future economic development in Iraq and provides insightful recommendations for encouraging positive economic growth.

Offering the most comprehensive and timely discussion of Iraq's economy to date, this critical volume will appeal to students and professors of international studies, political economy, and Middle East studies as well as anyone considering doing business in this rapidly changing economy.

**Contents:** Preface 1. Iraq's Lost Decades 2. Population and Key Macroeconomic Variables 3. Health, Poverty, Education, and Gender Issues 4. Corruption 5. Political Stability and Economic Development 6. Oil and Gas 7. Agriculture and the Public Distribution System 8. Financial Intermediation 9. State-Owned Enterprises 10. Entrepreneurship in Post-Conflict Iraq 11. Infrastructure and Essential Services 12. International Trade and Finance 13. Fiscal, Monetary, and Exchange Rate Policy 14. Iraq in 2025 Bibliography Index

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Gunter has written the definitive account in English of the contemporary Iraqi economy. The scope of coverage and degree of detail is matched by clear exposition and thoughtful analysis. Summing up: Essential." - *CHOICE: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*, October 2013 ([ala.org/acrl/choice](http://ala.org/acrl/choice))

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#### From the Author

This is an attempt to write the book that I wish I had read before getting off the plane in Iraq in 2005. By that time, I had read or at least scanned several hundred books, journal articles, and research studies on the post-1955 political-economy of Iraq. What I wasn't able to find was a single recent work that attempted to provide an integrated study of the entire political-economy. The books by Lord Salter (1955), Abbas Alnasrawi (2002 and 1994), Kamil Mahdi (2002 and 2000), and unpublished studies by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were excellent and generously repaid a close reading. But these and the other similar works were either outdated or included only some of the key sectors and challenges facing post-2003 Iraq. What I needed was a recent work written, not for my colleagues at the University, but for the intelligent layman and women that I worked with for a total of twenty-five months in Iraq. I needed a work that attempted - in an integrated fashion - to describe, analyze, and make policy recommendations for almost the entire political-economy of Iraq. The reader must judge whether I was successful.

#### About the Author

**Frank R. Gunter**, Associate Professor of Economics, Lehigh University, US and Retired Colonel, US Marine Corps

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