

Civil Society In Saudi Arabia The Power And Challenges Of

This thesis examines the international and domestic regimes for heritage protection. The thesis includes an historical and contemporary analysis of the World Heritage Convention, a comparative analysis of Western and Middle Eastern domestic regimes, and a focused exploration and analysis of the regime for heritage protection in Saudi Arabia. These analyses reveal that countries with strong civic institutions and processes have developed correlatively strong heritage protection regimes in governance and the law. The importance of pluralistic civil society is clear, as it produces research expertise in academia and non-profit organizations, in addition to engaging communities and people in interest group lobbying for heritage protection. The analysis also reveals the importance of representative government, which responds to civil society, interest groups and influence. As predicted, heritage protection is strongest in industrialised countries with pluralistic institutions and actors and representative government. The World Heritage Convention has catalyzed and facilitated heritage protection in countries without the same level of civil society engagement and representative government by raising the awareness of

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authoritarian regimes about the necessity and benefits of heritage protection. In this way, the Convention has served as a type of international civic actor. However, as the analysis of Saudi Arabia reveals, heritage protection in authoritarian regimes occurs at the discretion of the leadership. This leads to lower levels of protection than in countries with higher levels of civil society influence and representative government. In Saudi Arabia, heritage protection has suffered as a result of religious, commercial, and nationalistic interests that have determined the value of heritage, sometimes contrary to the Convention's definition of outstanding universal value. However, there is evidence of fledgling norms of heritage protection emerging in Saudi Arabia, manifest in the recent passage of a new domestic legislation. The thesis contains recommendations for improvements to the Saudi regime of heritage protection include the building of partnerships with international experts to serve as technical consultants and mentors to Saudi scholars. In addition, the Saudi regime must construct new governance and procedural structures that establish autonomy for the heritage system from commercial, religious, and state interference. Transparency in governance is also necessary to ensure decisions are made based on considerations of outstanding universal value. Saudi Arabia has a wealth of pre-Islamic heritage, as well as contemporary lived heritage, that deserves protection

and will benefit from these recommendations.

The various and different Middle Eastern countries are addressing new key reform and governance reform processes but also administration and policy issues of enduring importance; decentralization and local government, non-profit organizations, political culture, and reform of the policy process. This book provides assessment of national strategies for reform in public administration and policy, how these strategies have fared in implementation; and what challenges must be overcome to achieve real and sustainable progress. Seven country case studies will explore the overall policy-making process from a critical perspective and consider how it could be strengthened. Four cases will deal with the controversial issues of decentralization of power and decision-making. Two cases will address the role of civil society in the policymaking and reform process. Introductory and concluding chapters will place these discussions in context and draw the primary lessons for policy-makers. The main objectives of the book are to present different examples of specific public policy and administration, as well as governance issues in the Middle East so that policymakers (both in the region and the world who are interested in the Middle East), as well as practitioners, scholars and graduate students can utilize the book as a study guide to better understand various dynamics in governance in

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the Middle East. This approach will enable the volume to bridge global perspectives on governance development with regional perspectives and experience, bringing shared expertise, intellectual inquisitiveness, and experience in the professional practice of public policy and administration to bear on these common challenges.

The notions of democracy and civil society are inextricably linked. Democracy fosters the development of civil society, as it allows freedom of association to the individuals. This space then links the individuals to the state. In the backdrop of the wave of political liberalization sweeping through West Asia since the early 1990s, the debate on democratization in the region has been associated with the study of three crucial issues, namely: Does civil society exist in the region? What are its strengths and its weaknesses? What does the future hold for its existence? Evidence from the political processes of some countries of the region reveals that civil society has strengthened in the recent past. This book examines the notion of civil society and its relations with democracy and state in the context of West Asia.

"Civil society and human rights activists in Saudi Arabia are struggling for greater popular political participation, judicial reform, and an end to discrimination against women and minorities. Saudi authorities have responded by arresting rights

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defenders and attempting to intimidate, those calling for change. [This report] presents the stories of 11 prominent Saudi civil society and human rights activists, and their struggles to resist government efforts to silence them. ... Authorities have attempted to stem the growth of independent activism through a sweeping repression campaign, which has included threats, intimidation, investigations, prosecutions, detentions, and long prison terms."--Back cover.

Leading scholars assembled by the Civil Society in the Middle East program provide lucid, informed essays on the quality of political life, weighing the role of civil society and assessing the prospects for political reform in the Middle East. Researchers studying gender politics in Arab societies have been puzzled by a phenomenon common in many Arab states – while women are granted suffrage rights, they are often discriminated against by the state in their private lives. This book addresses this phenomenon, maintaining that the Arab state functions according to a certain ‘logic’ and ‘patterns’ which have direct consequences on its gender policies, in both the public and private spheres. Using the features of the Arab Authoritarian state as a basis for a theoretical framework of analysis, the author draws on detailed fieldwork and first-hand interviews to study women’s rights in three countries - Yemen, Syria, and Kuwait. She argues that the puzzle may be resolved once we focus on the features of the Arab state, and its stage of

development. Offering a new approach to the study of gender and politics in Arab states, this book will be of great interest to scholars and students of gender studies, international politics and Middle East studies.

The transition paradigm has traditionally viewed civil society activism as an essential condition for the establishment of democracy. The democracy promotion strategies of Western policy-makers have, therefore, been based on strengthening civil society in authoritarian settings in order to support the development of social capital -to challenge undemocratic regimes. This book questions the validity of the link between an active associational life and democratization. It examines civil society in the Arab world in order to illustrate how authoritarian constraints structure civil society dynamics in the region in ways that hinder transition to democracy. Building on innovative theoretical work and drawing on empirical data from extensive fieldwork in the region, this study demonstrates how the activism of civil society in five different Arab countries strengthens rather than weakens authoritarian practices and rule. Through an analysis of the specific legal and political constraints on associational life, and the impact of these on relations between different civic groups, and between associations and state authorities, the book demonstrates that the claim that civil society plays a positive role in processes of democratic transformation is highly

questionable. Offering a broad and alternative vision of the state of civil society in the region, this book will be an important contribution to studies on Middle Eastern politics, democratization and civil society activism.

Human Rights Watch's annual World Report 2016 highlights the armed conflict in Syria, international drug reform, drones and electronic mass surveillance and is a must-read for anyone interested in the fight to protect human rights in every corner of the globe.

There is a struggle for the hearts and minds of Muslims unfolding across the Islamic world. The conflict pits Muslims who support pluralism and democracy against others who insist such institutions are antithetical to Islam. With some 1.3 billion people worldwide professing Islam, the outcome of this contest is sure to be one of the defining political events of the twenty-first century. Bringing together twelve engaging essays by leading specialists focusing on individual countries, this pioneering book examines the social origins of civil-democratic Islam, its long-term prospects, its implications for the West, and its lessons for our understanding of religion and politics in modern times. Although depicted by its opponents as the product of political ideas "made in the West" civil-democratic Islam represents an indigenous politics that seeks to build a distinctive Islamic modernity. In countries like Turkey, Iran, Malaysia, and Indonesia, it has become a major political force. Elsewhere its influence is apparent in efforts to devise Islamic grounds for women's rights, religious tolerance, and democratic citizenship.

Everywhere it has generated fierce resistance from religious conservatives. Examining this high-stakes clash, *Remaking Muslim Politics* breaks new ground in the comparative study of

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Islam and democracy. The contributors are Bahman Baktiari, Thomas Barfield, John R. Bowen, Dale F. Eickelman, Robert W. Hefner, Peter Mandaville, Augustus Richard Norton, Gwenn Okruhlik, Michael G. Peletz, Diane Singerman, Jenny B. White, and Muhammad Qasim Zaman.

The term 'wasta stems from the Arabic root for 'middle' or 'medium' and describes the phenomenon of using 'connections' to find job, government services or other favors to circumvent bureaucracy or bypass the system as a whole. The effects of 'wasta' may be both positive or negative, and is not a phenomenon that is particular to the Arab or Muslim world, but also to many other cultures and regions of the world, with similar concepts popularly known as ubuntu, guanxi, harambee, naoberschop, or "old boy network" used in African, Chinese and European societies. By its very nature 'wasta' is an area of grey or even black information, and, like corruption to which it is most often associated, is hard to assess although country corruption perception indexes attempt to provide a quantifiable basis. In the final analysis such ratings are based on perceptions of corruption, and this perception may vary strongly depending on different societal structures and cultural modes, whether these are extended family systems, tribal, clans or more atomized societies where relationships are essentially transactional and rule based. In a western perspective where 'wasta' may be considered as a form of corruption, in other societies it may be perceived as something 'natural' and not criminal, and using one's 'wasta' in tribal societies to help clan members is seen as a duty. The difference stems from the 'innocent' use of 'wasta' to make introductions, as opposed to its abuse in placing unqualified persons in positions. The volume brings together academics and professional experts to examine a range of multi-faceted social, economic and

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political issues raised by the use and abuse of social networking, covering various topics like: 'wasta' interpersonal connections in family and business ties, The relationship between inequality-adjusted human development and corruption perception indexes in the Gulf region, 'wasta' and business networking, assessing the economic cost of 'wasta', 'wasta' and its impact on quality oriented education reform and the perceptions of young people, The use of 'wasta' to overcome socio-cultural barriers for women and men The volume also offers insights into social relations and ethics, and how the use of 'wasta' contradicts with common held religious principles, along with some country studies on Islamic principles and the use of 'wasta'. Mohamed Ramady is a Visiting Associate Professor, King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals, Saudi Arabia.

Although the position of Saudi women within society draws media attention throughout the world, young Saudi men remain part of a silent mass, their thoughts and views rarely heard outside of the Kingdom. Based on primary research across Saudi Arabia with young men from a diverse range of backgrounds, Mark C. Thompson allows for this distinct group of voices to be heard, revealing their opinions and attitudes towards the societal and economic transformations affecting their lives within a gender-segregated society and examining the challenges and dilemmas facing young Saudi men in the twenty-first century. From ideas and beliefs about, identity, education, employment, marriage prospects and gender segregation, as well as political participation and exclusion, this study in turn invites us to reconsider the future of Saudi Arabia as a globalized kingdom.

This book examines how civil society, public debate and freedom of speech affect natural resource governance. Drawing on the theories of Robert Dahl, Jurgen Habermas and Robert

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Putnam, the book introduces the concept of 'public brainpower', proposing that good institutions require: fertile public debate involving many and varied contributors to provide a broad base for conceiving new institutions; checks and balances on existing institutions; and the continuous dynamic evolution of institutions as the needs of society change. The book explores the strength of these ideas through case studies of 18 oil and gas-producing countries: Algeria, Angola, Azerbaijan, Canada, Colombia, Egypt, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Libya, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Qatar, Russia, Saudi, UAE, UK and Venezuela. The concluding chapter includes 10 tenets on how states can maximize their public brainpower, and a ranking of 33 resource-rich countries and the degree to which they succeed in doing so. The Introduction and the chapters 'Norway: Public Debate and the Management of Petroleum Resources and Revenues', 'Kazakhstan: Civil Society and Natural-Resource Policy in Kazakhstan', and 'Russia: Public Debate and the Petroleum Sector' of this book are available open access under a CC BY 4.0 license at link.springer.com.

The GCC is a major player in the post-2011 reordering of the Middle East. Despite the rise in prominence of individual Gulf states - especially Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates - and the growth of the GCC as a collective entity, surprisingly little attention has been paid to the actual mechanics of policy-making in the region. This book analyses the vital role that institutions are coming to play in shaping policy in the Gulf Arab states. The research coincides with two key developments that have given institutions new importance in the policy process: the emergence of a new generation of leaders in the Gulf, and the era of low oil prices. Both developments, along with dramatic demographic change, have compelled state and citizens to re-evaluate the nature of the social contract that binds them together.

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Contributors assess the changing relationship between state and citizen and evaluate the role that formal and informal institutions play in mediating such change and informing policy. The book shows how academic, social and economic institutions are responding to the increasingly complex process of decision-making, where citizens demand better services and further empowerment, and states are obliged to seek wider counsel, although wanting to retain ultimate authority. With contributions from both academics and practitioners, this book will be highly relevant for researchers and policymakers alike.

The second edition of this well-regarded volume explores the societies of the Middle East and North Africa. Presenting original studies written by the world's leading MENA scholars, it sheds light upon the organizing structures, human vulnerabilities, and dynamic forces that propel social change among the peoples of the Arab world, as well as Israel, Turkey, and Iran. The volume can be used in conjunction with *The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa* textbook for a comprehensive overview of the region. Carrying over from the previous edition, among the rich topics covered are agriculture, urbanization, development, identity, citizenship, gender, religion, civil society, the environment, and youths. This second edition adds two new chapters on refugees and public opinion, as each constitutes a crucial part of the region's social and cultural context. This edition also updates existing chapters to account for the latest events and trends, including the COVID-19 pandemic, popular protests, and demographic growth. Written in an accessible way, the chapters are clearly structured and contain insightful analysis, memorable case studies, illustrative photographs, and visualized data that illuminate the contours of social life across this diverse region. Each chapter also ends with curated questions for discussion, followed by annotated bibliographies to help spark

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further research to encourage seamless adoption into classrooms.

"What are the dynamics of civic activism in authoritarian regimes? How do new social actors--many of them informal, "below the radar" groups--interact with these regimes? What mechanisms do the power elite employ to deal with societal dissidence? The authors of *Civil Society in Syria and Iran* explore the nature of state-society relations in two countries that are experiencing popular demands for political pluralism amid the constraints of authoritarian retrenchment."--Publisher's website.

Civil society participants have voiced concerns that the environmental problems that were the subject of multilateral environmental agreements negotiated during the 1992 Rio processes are not serving to ameliorate global environmental problems. These concerns raise significant questions regarding the utility of negotiating agreements through the UN. This book elucidates the complexity of how participants engage in these negotiations through the various processes that take place under the auspices of the UN—primarily those related to climate and biological diversity. By taking an ethnographic approach and providing concrete examples of how it is that civil society participants engage in making policy, this book develops a robust sense of the implications of the current terrain of policy-making—both for the environment, and for the continued participation of non-state actors in multilateral environmental governance. Using data gathered at actual negotiations, the book develops concepts such as participation and governance beyond theory. The research uses participant observation ethnographic methods to tie the theoretical frameworks to people's actual activities as policy is generated and contested. Whereas topics associated with global environmental governance are traditionally addressed in fields such as international relations and political science, this book contributes to

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developing a richer understanding of the theories using a sociological framework, tying individual activities into larger social relations and shedding light on critical questions associated with transnational civil society and global politics.

As the recent revolutions in the Middle East have demonstrated, civil society in this part of the world is on the move. The increasingly important role of non-state actors – a phenomenon of globalization- has characterized developments throughout the region, affecting the struggle for democracy and for peace. This volume brings together scholars primarily from the region to analyse the varied activities and contributions of NGOs, the private sector and the new media, from Morocco to Iran, along with the involvement of diaspora groups. The chapter on facebook in the recent Egyptian revolution captures the role of this new media while the study on similar technology in Iran outlines the barriers raised by the authorities in the current struggles there. Even the fledgling process of democratization in Saudi Arabia is driven by non-state actors while the veteran women's movements in the Maghreb serve as an example for the post-Arab spring era in those countries. Providing one of the first assessments of the role of non-state actors in the Middle East, this book will be essential reading for students of Political Science, Sociology and Civil Society, amongst others. This is a comparative study that seeks to demonstrate how integration into global

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markets has affected political development in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. It is widely believed that free markets foster democracy by decentralizing political power and strengthening civil society. Careful analysis of recent developments in Egypt and Saudi Arabia, however, reveals that market integration can have widely divergent political consequences based on the nature of the domestic economy "linking in" to the global marketplace. In Saudi Arabia, market integration has actually led to weakened representative institutions, the disenfranchisement of a formerly powerful opposition class, and the total centralization of political, military and economic power based on a system of tribal patronage. In Egypt, market integration has led to considerable political liberalization, but this may ultimately cause dangerous social upheaval rather than stable, democratic governance. While the spread of capitalist markets is undoubtedly shaping the politics of the region, it will take enlightened policy making to channel these forces toward the development of democratic political institutions.

This book provides valuable insights into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) through a comprehensive examination of Vision 2030, an ambitious economic plan by the KSA to reinvent and diversify its economy from a heavy dependence on hydrocarbon to knowledge-based resources. Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Saudi Arabia: Vision 2030 discusses how this initiative will

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assist the government in achieving its envisioned goals by creating a culture of research, innovation and entrepreneurship. It studies the current state of the field as well as new policies and reforms in Saudi Arabia which encompass education systems, ICT infrastructure and a vibrant innovation landscape that includes academia, the public and private sectors and civil society. The authors present a number of real-life case studies as a model of inspiration for cross-sector development. The book provides a source of inspiration for other nations in studying the KSA's determined and ambitious plans as a country in a transitioning journey, from a natural resources-based economy towards a knowledge-based country with considerable diversification in all sectors. This book is a useful reference for students, researchers and policy and decision-makers in understanding Saudi innovation and the economic diversification ecosystem.

The Middle East and Globalization: Encounters and Horizons brings together contributions from leading scholars in Middle East Studies with a shared interest in theoretically ambitious approaches to globalization and world society. The volume discusses past and contemporary political, societal, economic, and cultural trends in the Middle East against the background of comprehensive theories of globalization. The contributors draw from a shared methodological

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approach to look at the fractured encounters and shared horizons of globalization that are shaping the Middle East.

Making sense of Saudi Arabia is crucially important today. The kingdom's western province contains the heart of Islam, and it is the United States' closest Arab ally and the largest producer of oil in the world. However, the country is undergoing rapid change: its aged leadership is ceding power to a new generation, and its society, dominated by young people, is restive. Saudi Arabia has long remained closed to foreign scholars, with a select few academics allowed into the kingdom over the past decade. This book presents the fruits of their research as well as those of the most prominent Saudi academics in the field. This volume focuses on different sectors of Saudi society and examines how the changes of the past few decades have affected each. It reflects new insights and provides the most up-to-date research on the country's social, cultural, economic and political dynamics.

Civil society in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (voluntary work).Civil Society in Saudi ArabiaThe Power and Challenges of Association

From late 2010 a series of dramatic and unprecedented events swept across the Middle East and North Africa, toppling several autocratic regimes that had held power for decades and ushering in a new climate of dissent and democratisation.

The Arab Revolutions in Context seizes a unique opportunity to reflect on these seismic events, their causes and consequences, and the core issues facing the region as it moves forward. This volume is more than a collection of detailed thematic essays. It situates the Arab Revolutions within their broader contextual backgrounds—showing that a unique set of historical events, as well as local, regional and global dynamics, has converged to provide the catalyst that triggered the recent revolts—and also within a new conceptual framework. The argument here is that the Arab Revolutions pose a very specific challenge to conventional wisdom concerning democracy and democratisation in the Middle East. The Arab Revolutions in Context is the first volume of its kind to address the Arab Revolutions and the varying analyses, debates and discussions that they have stimulated.

Did digital media really "cause" the Arab Spring, or is it an important factor of the story behind what might become democracy's fourth wave? An unlikely network of citizens used digital media to start a cascade of social protest that ultimately toppled four of the world's most entrenched dictators. Howard and Hussain find that the complex causal recipe includes several economic, political and cultural factors, but that digital media is consistently one of the most important sufficient and necessary conditions for explaining both the fragility of regimes and the

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success of social movements. This book looks at not only the unexpected evolution of events during the Arab Spring, but the deeper history of creative digital activism throughout the region.

Analysis of both official and opposition Saudi divine politics is often monolithic, conjuring images of conservatism, radicalism, misogyny and resistance to democracy. Madawi Al-Rasheed challenges this stereotype as she examines a long tradition of engaging with modernism that gathered momentum with the Arab uprisings and incurred the wrath of both the regime and its Wahhabi supporters. With this nascent modernism, constructions of new divine politics, anchored in a rigorous reinterpretation of foundational Islamic texts and civil society activism are emerging in a context where authoritarian rule prefers its advocates to remain muted. The author challenges scholarly wisdom on Islamism in general and blurs the boundaries between secular and religious politics.

Internet, satellite channels and new technologies are evolving and progressing by the day allowing free flow and exchange of information and ideas. And despite governments' attempts to frustrate or quash independent players and research centers, the number of independent activists is dramatically increasing and the NGOs are booming. And if corruption were a sensitive subject to governments, it has become a basic commodity on internet websites, NGOs work and discussion

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programs on satellite channels that are watched and heard by millions across the Arab world. Tackling corruption is no longer a monopoly of government-appointed experts and lawyers. It had reached activists and the societies from all backgrounds. There are few civil society organizations that tackle corruption in this region but are on the rise. In numbers, the Arab civil society in general is witnessing a noticeable vivacity in a number of Arab countries and multiplying by the day despite the restrictive laws and regulations. ... Certainly, civil society can contribute much to cure corruption, but influential countries such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia do not promote anti-corruption activities or for that matter the establishment of NGOs to fight it. Its main dilemma however is related to finding sources for funding for its activities and development. And while the most common mechanism for encouraging individuals and corporations to make cash and in-kind donations to NGOs is through tax incentives for donors, tax deductions by law are given to individuals who build mosques. Arab countries that do allocate support and tax exemptions to NGOs make sure that recipient societies follow rather than monitor their policies. And though regimes acknowledge the repercussions of rampant corruption on their economies and on foreign investment, they remain hesitant in encouraging the civil society to carry the torch or initiating dramatic changes. In the words of Ahmed Lari, chief of the

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Kuwaiti Association for Public Funds: Corruption delays development because officials gear budgets toward projects that make them money rather than toward those that can benefit peoples such as education, health and public services.(5)

From the Introduction

One of the implications of Orientalism is that the Arab world, as a homogenous entity, is often analysed as an anomaly within the international system. This book argues that, despite their differences, societies across the globe ultimately construct their own history according to very similar dynamics and tensions. The methodological approach of this book, using different countries within the Arab world as models, offers the reader an analysis of relations between the elites and their opposition in a variety of settings. A definition of the political structure of each country is drawn from this analysis before potential future scenarios, as according to country specific experts, are proposed. This model provides a useful contribution to students and scholars of political science and international relations. Through providing a comparative study of the political regimes currently operating in the Arab world; their elites, civil society, power resources and political resistance, this book illustrates that despite the image of homogeneity sometimes portrayed by the Arab world, it is the multiplicity of models and heterogeneity of regimes that constitute reality.

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Contributors: Anne Applebaum, Anne-Marie Brady, Alexander Cooley, Javier Corrales, Ron Deibert, Larry Diamond, Patrick Merloe, Abbas Milani, Andrew Nathan, Marc F. Plattner, Peter Pomerantsev, Douglas Rutzen, Lilia Shevtsova, Alex Vatanka, Christopher Walker, and Frederic Wehrey

The legal situation of associations and foundations in the countries of central and eastern Europe, their terms of creation and operation, their objectives and their fiscal status were examined on the occasion of the multilateral meeting in Strasbourg from 27 to 29 November 1996, organised by the Council of Europe. This book includes papers presented at the first conference entitled "Network of Reform and Democratic Change in the Arab World" which was jointly organized by Al Quds Center for Political Studies and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Amman, 8-10 December 2006. Papers were presented by intellectuals and politicians who reside on various locations of the reform spectrum. They addressed a wide range of reform concepts, its priorities and mechanism. The papers also tackle the reform experience and official, civil, Arab, and international initiatives. They also identify the role of "political Islam" in this process

"Saudi Arabia has considerable pent-up and frustrated social energy, both among young people and their parents' generation. Civil society can be an asset for the nation, but requires reform of laws governing associational life." --

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Religion in Saudi Arabia is undoubtedly a powerful force, but it is unclear to what extent the Saudi religious establishment controls the expression of religion in Saudi Arabia. In many publications, scholars make assumptions about the nature of the relationship between the religious establishment and the state. Some scholars have assumed that the religious scholars (ulema?) are the true power in Saudi Arabia and it is they who control government policy. Others have claimed that they scholars intentionally stay out of the state's way and attempt only to affect Saudi civil society or that the scholars simply function as yes-men, legitimizing the state's actions but lacking any autonomy. Clearly these positions are incommensurable. What, then, is the reality of the relationship between the scholars and the state in the Kingdom? Do the religious scholars control the government or do they limit themselves to simply controlling Saudi civil society? This paper examines the fatwas published by the Saudi Permanent Council for the Issuing of Fatwas (al-lajna al-d?ima li'l-ift?) between 2000-2013 in order to determine the primary concerns of the Council and their ability to affect both Saudi society and government. It argues against both positions; this paper will demonstrate that the Council does not attempt to control government policy, it does not simply serve to affirm and legitimize that policy, and it shows little interest in affecting Saudi society in general. In reality, the Council is a religious

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institution and their concerns are overwhelmingly religious and ritual, rather than political or social. This paper will also use newspaper articles from a variety of sources in Saudi Arabia and the surrounding nations to examine the first stages of an ongoing project known as the “High Values Program” (barn?maj al-qiyam al-culiy?). The stated purpose of the program is to combat the religious rhetoric of groups like ISIS in the region. This paper will use the articles to demonstrate who, even when assisting the government in attempting to control society, the Council’s concerns remain ritual-oriented.

State-society dialogue in Saudi Arabia is one of the most contested issues in the country today, yet little is known about the National Dialogue process, and its relationship with Saudi society is frequently and widely misunderstood. The first to examine the Saudi Arabian National Dialogue process in its entirety, Mark C. Thompson investigates the relationship between the King Abdulaziz Center for National Dialogue (KACND) and the key social constituencies of Saudi society. Since its establishment in 2003, the KACND has attempted to promote a culture of dialogue and has encouraged the debate of contentious socio-political issues by bringing individuals together from across the Kingdom. Drawing on Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony, the author asks whether the Saudi socio-political system is moving from a form of patrimonial state to one of ideological hegemony and, if this is the case, whether the KACND is a catalyst, or even a driving force, in this transition. Saudi Arabia and the Path to Political Change investigates the practices and the impact of the KACND and

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assesses the extent to which the institution's activities, and the ongoing National Dialogue process, represent a viable attempt to address emerging political concerns in Saudi Arabia. Covering pivotal issues including women's empowerment, public health and employment, the author here explores the extensive impact of the KACND's activities on internal cross-constituency communication and discourse and shows how the process relates to wider regime strategies and to the evolution of the Saudi polity. Based on approximately 120 interviews conducted in Saudi Arabia from 2009 to 2011 and drawing on the evidence of a wide range of focus groups and interviews with National Dialogue participants, KACND officials, government ministers, lawyers and journalists, this book provides a unique insight into the effects and consequences of Saudi National Dialogue, and questions the extent to which wider ideological debate is possible in the Kingdom.

The history of consumerism shows that consumer movements in developed countries with capitalist economies in general, and in the United States in particular, have had great success in helping customers get safer products (car seat belts), more information (product labels), and better market regulation (the Consumer Product Safety Act). Consumer interests in developed countries are represented by several sets of organizations with different concerns. These consumer interests are fragmented but well articulated, whereas in developing countries, consumer interests are homogeneous and unarticulated. Moreover, compared with the hyper-connected world we live in today, in the past greater efforts were required to mobilize consumers for consumerism actions such as protests, boycotts, calls for policy change, and demands for more government regulations. The purpose of this study is to develop a testable model of consumerism, with a focus on market settings within a developed country, the United

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States, and a developing country, Saudi Arabia. The goals are to (a) understand why some consumers go beyond the norm to engage in consumerism behaviors, and (b) whether their level of consumerism differs between that of a developed and a developing country, and if so, why. To this end, a consumerism model based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) was developed. The research provides the first set of data and the first quantitative analysis regarding consumerism behaviors in conjunction with the use of an online platform (Twitter) among Saudi Arabian and American consumers. The developed model explained consumerism behaviors. Furthermore, this study demonstrates that the Saudi sample had a higher level of intent to engage in consumerism behaviors than did the American sample. Also, this study shows that the Saudi sample had a negative perception of government regulatory practices and a higher level of intent to engage in consumerism behaviors on Twitter than the American sample. Thus, in Saudi Arabia, a country with a restricted civil society and only one semi-independent consumer protection organization, more consumers use Twitter as a consumerism platform than in the US, a country with an unrestricted civil society and numerous independent consumer organizations.

Toby Matthiesen traces the politics of the Shia in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia from the nineteenth century until the present day. This book outlines the difficult experiences of being Shia in a Wahhabi state, and casts new light on how the Shia have mobilised politically to change their position. Shia petitioned the rulers, joined secular opposition parties and founded Islamist movements. Most Saudi Shia opposition activists profited from an amnesty in 1993 and subsequently found a place in civil society and the public sphere. However, since 2011 a new Shia protest movement has again challenged the state. The Other Saudis shows

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how exclusionary state practices created an internal Other and how sectarian discrimination has strengthened Shia communal identities. The book is based on little-known Arabic sources, extensive fieldwork in Saudi Arabia and interviews with key activists. Of immense geopolitical importance, the oil-rich Eastern Province is a crucial but little known factor in regional politics and Gulf security.

The United States' relationship with Saudi Arabia has been one of the cornerstones of U.S. policy in the Middle East for decades. Despite their substantial differences in history, culture, and governance, the two countries have generally agreed on important political and economic issues and have often relied on each other to secure mutual aims. The 1990-91 Gulf War is perhaps the most obvious example, but their ongoing cooperation on maintaining regional stability, moderating the global oil market, and pursuing terrorists should not be downplayed. Yet for all the relationship's importance, it is increasingly imperiled by mistrust and misunderstanding. One major question is Saudi Arabia's stability. In this Council Special Report, sponsored by the Center for Preventive Action, F. Gregory Gause III first explores the foundations of Riyadh's present stability and potential sources of future unrest. It is difficult not to notice that Saudi Arabia avoided significant upheaval during the political uprisings that swept the Middle East in 2011, despite sharing many of the social and economic problems of Egypt, Yemen, and Libya. But unlike their counterparts in Cairo, Sanaa, and Tripoli, Riyadh's leadership was able to maintain order in large part by increasing public spending on housing and salaries, relying on loyal and well-equipped security forces, and utilizing its extensive patronage networks. The divisions within the political opposition also helped the government's cause. This is not to say that Gause believes that the stability of the House of Saud is assured.

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He points out that the top heirs to the throne are elderly and the potential for disorderly squabbling may increase as a new generation enters the line of succession. Moreover, the population is growing quickly, and there is little reason to believe that oil will forever be able to buy social tranquility. Perhaps most important, Gause argues, the leadership's response to the 2011 uprisings did little to forestall future crises; an opportunity for manageable political reform was mostly lost. Turning to the regional situation, Gause finds it no less complex. Saudi Arabia has wielded considerable influence with its neighbors through its vast oil reserves, its quiet financial and political support for allies, and the ideological influence of salafism, the austere interpretation of Islam that is perhaps Riyadh's most controversial export. For all its wealth and religious influence, however, Saudi Arabia's recent record has been less than successful. It was unable to counter Iranian influence in post-Saddam Iraq, it could not prevent Hezbollah taking power in Lebanon, and its ongoing efforts to reconcile Hamas and the Palestinian Authority have come to naught. The U.S.-Saudi relationship has, unsurprisingly, been affected by these and other challenges, including Saudi unhappiness with Washington's decision to distance itself from Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak, the lack of progress on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, and Iran. For its part, the United States is unhappy with the Saudi intervention in Bahrain and Saudi support for radical Islamists around the region and the world. The two traditional anchors of the U.S.-Saudi relationship-the Cold War and U.S. operation of Riyadh's oil fields-are, Gause notes, no longer factors. It is no wonder, he contends, that the relationship is strained when problems are myriad and the old foundations of the informal alliance are gone. It would be far better, Gause argues, to acknowledge that the two countries can no longer expect to act in close concert under such conditions. He recommends that the

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United States reimagine the relationship as simply transactional, based on cooperation when interests-rather than habit-dictate. Prioritizing those interests will therefore be critical. Rather than pressuring Riyadh for domestic political reform, or asking it to reduce global oil prices, Gause recommends that the United States spend its political capital where it really matters: on maintaining regional security, dismantling terrorist networks, and preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. There have been few relationships more important to the United States than that with Saudi Arabia, and it is vital that, as it enters a new phase, the expectations and priorities of both countries are clear. In *Saudi Arabia in the New Middle East*, Gause effectively assesses the challenges and opportunities facing Saudi Arabia and makes a compelling argument for a more modest, businesslike relationship between Washington and Riyadh that better reflects modern realities. As the United States begins reassessing its commitments in the Greater Middle East, this report offers a clear vision for a more limited-but perhaps more appropriate and sustainable-future partnership.

An in-depth look at the most essential issues in the Middle East

Muslim Democracy explores the relationship between politics and religion in forty-seven Muslim-majority countries, focusing especially on those with democratic experience, such as Indonesia and Turkey, and drawing comparisons with their regional, non-Islamic counterparts. Unlike most studies of political Islam, this is a politically-focused book, more concerned with governing realities than ideology. By changing the terms of the debate from theology to politics, and including the full complement of Islamic countries, Schneier shows that the boundaries between church and state in the Islamic world are more variable and diverse than is commonly assumed. Through case studies and statistical comparisons between Muslim majority

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countries and their regional counterparts, Muslim Democracy shows that countries with different religions but similar histories are not markedly different in their levels of democratization. What many Islamists and western observers call "Islamic law," moreover, is more a political than a religious construct, with religion more the tool than the engine of politics. "Women who drive in Saudi Arabia," as the author says, "are not warned they will go to hell, but that they will go to jail." With the political salience of religion rising in many countries, this book is essential reading for students of comparative politics, religion, and democratization interested in exploring the shifting boundaries between faith and politics.

A systematic and up-to-date introduction to politics and society in the Middle East. It examines domestic, regional and global actors and in light of the so-called 'Arab Spring', pays particular attention to the tension between processes of democratization and ongoing authoritarianism.

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