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David Held and Kristian Ulrichsen, (Eds.). *The Transformation of the Gulf: Politics, Economics and the Global Order*. New York: Routledge, 2012.

This edited volume joins the growing body of literature that finds cohesion in the interlinked twentieth-century phenomena of the oil economy and state building in the six states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates). Aimed at a readership of scholars and students of the region as well as policy makers, the editors organize sixteen essays into three overarching sections: "The Domestic Context: Changing Dimensions of Political and Social Structures," "Economic Reforms and Evolution of Governing Structures," and, finally, "Internationalisation of the Gulf: Security and Foreign Policy."

As the title suggests, the underlying premise of this collection is that the Gulf region has undergone, and continues to experience, a "transformation" in terms of its domestic politics and social structures and its position in international affairs. Indeed, the notion that the advent of oil radically restructured social and economic life and politics of the Gulf States is well-covered ground that much recent scholarship attempts to challenge by pointing out deep historical processes which predate the mid-twentieth century and continue to shape the region. Despite this promising new trend, it would be foolhardy to deny the dramatic impact of oil on this region. The agenda that the editors set forth in their preface, to address "the political and economic transformations underway in the six states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and their repositioning within the global order" (p. xxiii), is a worthy one.

Held and Ulrichsen's introduction offers a useful overview of the book's themes, and will be fruitful reading for anyone looking for an entry point into the major analytical questions concerning the contemporary Arabian Peninsula. Following a brief historical overview in which they acknowledge long-established transregional connections spanning the Middle East and the Indian Ocean, the introduction moves to post-1945 oil and security concerns. Major themes introduced here and developed throughout the volume include uncertainty over how GCC states can manage the social contracts they incurred with their populations during initial oil booms, security issues and sectarian tensions following the 1979 Iranian Revolution, integration into global economics and politics through investments and international aid contributions, and concerns over unregulated migrant labor and the looming economic pitfalls of a pervasive overdependence on oil.

In Part 1, "The Domestic Context," five chapters address some of the main political and social concerns inside the GCC states. Greg Power provides a comparative analysis of political reform and the often painstaking development of parliamentary politics in Kuwait, Bahrain, and Oman. In his discussion of nationalism in the Gulf States, Neil Patrick makes the important point that GCC governments have tended to emphasize internal "others" such as religious minorities and migrant workers in constructing national identities. Moving to more specific demographic categories, John Chalcraft examines migration politics. Following the discovery of oil, the Arabian Peninsula attracted waves of migrant labor primarily from the Arab world, fuelling Pan-Arabist sentiments. In the 1970s-1990s, however, the Gulf states sought to replace these potentially politically volatile Arab labor populations with Asian migrants, culminating in the large-scale expulsions of Palestinian and Yemeni workers from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in 1991-2 following the 1990 Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. Asian migrants were systematically segregated legally, socially, and economically into enclaves that limit interaction with nationals. Chalcraft points out that the turn to Asian migrant labor allowed the ruling families of the GCC

to consolidate their power and eliminate the potential political threats posed by migrants from Arab states. The final chapter in this section, Abdulkhaleq Abdulla's "The Arab Gulf Moment," provides the most powerful statement on the current importance of the Arabian Gulf due to the influence the GCC states wield both in the Arab world and internationally. He provocatively argues, "These states have had to face daunting socio-political challenges, which indicate that the last four decades have not been luxurious but have, in fact, been extremely tough" (p. 109). Abdulla's call to reexamine the decades of development in all their complexities provides fertile ground for future scholarship on the Gulf.

In her chapter on gender dynamics in the GCC, Wanda Krause asks how the rentier state has appropriated women's organizations and managed women's political and public roles. This analysis provides a useful overview of female citizens' legal roles, education levels, official status in the family, and participation in government. Relegating these issues to a single chapter, rather than integrating an analysis of gender concerns (for both men and women) more broadly into discussions of society and economy represents a weakness of this volume. For example, it would be fascinating to see an acknowledgement of the gender dynamics of labor migration in Chalcraft's chapter: What has been the demographic gender balance of these labor migrations, and how have the gendered dynamics of migrant labor impacted state attitudes and anxieties regarding these non-citizen populations?

Six chapters take up economic questions in Part 2. Mark Thatcher analyzes how the establishment of independent regulatory agencies is linked to broader efforts to reform domestic markets and attract investors to the domestic market, while Rodney Wilson examines how the Islamic finance industry aims "to provide as wide a range of facilities as conventional banks, but through *shariah*-compliant products" (p. 161). The other chapters in this section consider rent distribution, efforts at economic diversification and the impact of fluctuating oil prices, and energy concerns.

In the final section on security and foreign policy, Kristian Ulrichsen convincingly argues that security studies must distinguish between different concepts of security "as a social construct and as a material threat" (p. 278). He also factors Yemen into his analysis, pointing out that crises in Yemen can serve as a warning to the GCC states on the potential repercussions of the simultaneous breakdown of economic development, political legitimacy, and environmental conditions. Other chapters in this section present an overview of security strategy and spending, examine foreign policy as a means to increase influence abroad (with Qatar as a case study), and outline GCC provisions of international humanitarian aid.

This edited volume provides comprehensive and provocative analyses of a range of issues impacting the GCC states today. A valuable addition to Arabian Peninsula studies, specialists across disciplines will find chapters that add to their understanding of this region and stimulate new research questions. *The Transformation of the Gulf* is a welcome resource for readers interested in better understanding the ongoing complexities of this region.

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