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Madawi Al-Rasheed (Ed.). *Salman's Legacy: The Dilemmas of a New Era in Saudi Arabia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.

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This edited volume is another notable contribution to the study of Saudi Arabia by Madawi Al-Rasheed. Here is a snapshot of what one may expect in Al-Rasheed's latest contribution. Toby Matthiesen (Chapter 10) provides the historical context of the crucial role that Saudi Arabia played in the Global South during the Cold War. The author argues that the strength of the US-Saudi alliance in the post-Cold War neoliberal order is predicated on the financial and ideational contribution that Saudi Arabia made to the Western anti-Communist efforts during the Cold War. US-Saudi relations have survived several tumultuous periods, underscoring the importance of the American support for the regime in Riyadh as an integral component of the survival strategy that the House of Saud pursues (Gause, Chapter 1). These relations, according to many accounts, are irreplaceable for Saudi Arabia. Accordingly, Naser al-Tamimi (Chapter 12) maintains that while Saudi Arabia and China have strong economic ties, it is unlikely that Saudi Arabia would strategically ally itself to China or any major power other than the United States.

It would not be fair to give all credit for the longevity of the House of Saud to the United States and the support it provides for the regime in Riyadh. While Gregory Gause III (Chapter 1) underscores the significance of US support, he argues that the institutionalized Saudi patronage networks that firmly bind influential constituencies and subsets of society to the regime deserve credit as well. Primarily, oil-funded mechanisms, Gause argues, enhance regime security by incentivizing potential forces of change to submit to the status-quo. The importance of the "redistributive economy" for the survival of the Saudi regime is further discussed by Steffen Hertog (Chapter 3). Hertog maintains that networks of patronage help with the stability of the regime by "depoliticizing the citizens." Gregory Gause argues that the prudent use of oil revenue helped with the cohesion of the ruling family and alleviated some uncertainties around the issue of succession in the kingdom. Madawi Al-Rasheed (Chapter 2) picks up on the notion of succession and adds an interesting nuance to it. According to Gause, while running the country as a corporate business might have eased the succession process in the eyes of the courtiers, the public is often kept in the dark. Al-Rasheed argues that this is yet another component of the Saudi survival strategy. The uncertainty that is precipitated by the regime's lack of transparency, the author believes, brings with it an allure that fosters and cultivates "conspicuous submission" to the royal authority (p. 70). Sultan Alamer (Chapter 4) adds another important layer to the strategy that Saudis have employed to maintain their grip on power. Alamer problematizes the strong sense of regional affiliation among Saudi citizens to argue that cultivating regionalism (as opposed to creating a national identity) has, counterintuitively, served the stability of the regime.

In the realm of ideas, four contributors to this edited volume provide an insightful addition. Andrew Hammond (Chapter 6) offers a sophisticated genealogy of Salafiyah and the role it has played in the Islamization of Saudi foreign policies. Due to the extra-territorial and above-national nature of Salafiyah, Salafis, as Michael Farquhar argues (Chapter 7), have formed, across several countries, a "community of discourse." According to Farquhar, Saudis find it essential to have an influential role in the Salafi epistemic community; however, the questionable views and policies held by the House of Saud predicate that status on a precarious foundation. Saudis' dilemmas on the ideational front are not limited to this. Cole Bunzel (Chapter 8) analyzes the ideological leanings of ISIS and demonstrates how the appropriation of a Wahhabi posture by the Islamic State was host to potential threats to the stability of the

kingdom. In addition, Nadav Samin (Chapter 9) explores the complex ideational dynamics in Saudi local politics that render the kingdom a natural target for the ISIS campaign.

Saudi Arabia under the aegis of King Salman and Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman is breaking from the past and exploring new avenues of practice both in local and foreign policy domains (Al-Rasheed, Chapter 11). The “distributional basis of the regime survival” (Gause, p. 39) is being revisited, matters of royal succession have more than ever been tied to foreign policy (Hertog), some of the old alliances are reshuffled, and typical Saudi cautious diplomacy has been replaced by more muscular interventionist policies. This can nevertheless trouble the stability of the kingdom in the long run (Al-Rasheed, Chapter 11). Meanwhile, an auspicious social transformation is taking place. Nora Doaiji (Chapter 5) demonstrates how an authentic Saudi feminism is thriving on the possibilities provided by the virtual space, where women seem to be extricating themselves from traditional religious and societal constraints, assuming an agency free from state manipulations.

Salman's Legacy: The Dilemmas of a New Era in Saudi Arabia suffers some of the issues that many other edited volumes do. There are clear discrepancies in the quality of scholarship among chapters. While there are chapters with well-substantiated arguments, there are others that are deficient in this regard. The latter may seem to contain several cases in which arguments are predicated on insufficient or unstated premises, leading those of the audience who might be starters in the study of Saudi Arabia to wonder whether some conclusions are drawn hastily and/or non-sequiturs are employed. This raises the question whether or not there was any consensus among all the authors contributing to this work about the intended audience. Also, there are chapters wherein the authors seem to have got carried by their particular arguments/points, lost the overall thematic focus of the edited book, and struggled to tie their arguments back to the dilemmas of the new era under King Salman's aegis. In spite of all these inconsistencies, this book as an invaluable addition to the literature on Saudi Arabia. Each and every chapter of this edited book offers great insights on this fascinating polity and the historical/contemporary challenges it faces in domestic, regional, and international fronts. This is a must-read for anyone interested in the study of Saudi Arabia.

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