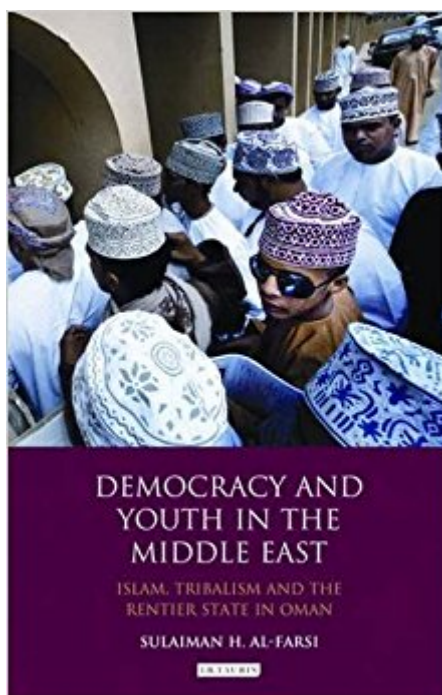


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Democracy And Youth In The Middle East: Islam, Tribalism And The Rentier State In Oman (Library Of Modern Middle East Studies)



Synopsis

The leaders of the oil-rich rentier states of the Middle East, and in particular in the Gulf, have hitherto often predicated their legitimacy on a tacit social contract with their (much poorer) populations. This social contract consists of little or no direct taxation, with some sort of subsidized living. But the casualty of this tacit agreement is often political participation, an issue which has come to the forefront in the Middle East following the 'Arab Spring' of 2011. Here, Sulaiman Al-Farsi looks at the impact the rentier nature of the Gulf States has on political participation, focusing on the nexus between tribe, religion and a new generation of young, highly educated citizens that is present in Oman. Specifically exploring the concept of shura (consultation), and how nascent concepts of democracy in the practice of shura have impacted and shaped the process of democratization, Al-Farsi's book is vital in the examination of the political discourse surrounding democratization across one of the most strategically important, but little understood states in the Middle East.

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""There is very little scholarly work on the Sultanate of Oman and while some excellent academic work has begun to appear recently, there have been precious few works written by Omanis themselves that examine in any detail the changing nature of state-society relations within the Sultanate or the idea of state legitimacy beyond the tired debates surrounding constructs of the

'Rentier state'. Sulaiman H. Al-Farsi's work is therefore to be welcomed as both a refreshing and unique contribution on how we should now understand the evolution of such change in Oman. The result of his research is an exciting yet informed insight into the political, religious and social forces that are now shaping identity in Oman. While the process of top down reform was generally accepted, Al-Farsi also identified where resistance to such change was concentrated and how the government was adopting new strategies to assuage such concerns. This book offers a unique insight into how an established Arab state can develop indigenous forms of political and social mobility independent of outside pressure or internal friction that all too often has led to support for more radical (usually Islamist) political groupings.'" –â œ Professor Clive Jones, Chair of Middle East Studies and International Politics, University of Leeds, UK

Sulaiman Al-Farsi holds a PhD in Politics and International Studies at the University of Leeds, UK.

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