



Yemen:: Revolution, Civil War and Unification (Library of Modern Middle East Studies)

Uzi Rabi

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Yemen, tucked into the southwestern corner of the Arabian Peninsula, has often escaped regional and international attention. And yet its history illuminates some of the most important issues at play in the modern Middle East: from Cold War rivalries to the growth of Islamic extremism in the 1990s, and from the rise of 'Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula' (AQAP) in the post-9/11 period to Obama-era drone strikes. Uzi Rabi looks at this country and its economic and political history through the prism of state failure. He examines Yemen's trajectory from revolutions and civil war in the 1960s to unification in the 1990s and on to the 2011 uprisings which eventually saw the fall from power of Ali Abdallah Salih in 2012.

Covering the twentieth-century history of Yemen from traditional society to a melting-pot of revolutions accompanied by foreign intervention, Uzi Rabi's book offers an analysis of a state that is failing, both in terms of day-to-day functioning, and in terms of offering its citizens a modicum of security. Rabi covers the initial rulers of the country, Imam Yahya and his descendents, who ruled Yemen until 1962. But with the growing influence of Gamal Abd al-Nasser's vision of Arab nationalism, and the defeat the British and their allies in November 1967, the way was paved for the formation of South Yemen: the only declared Marxist regime in the Arab world. Rabi tracks the turbulent political history of the two Yemens, in particular South Yemen, which between 1967 and 1986 saw five presidents come and go, three of whom were ousted by violent means. But with unification came a new set of problems concerning poverty, terrorism and corruption. Rabi's analysis of the political beginnings, rule and eventual downfall of Salih are key to understanding all of these, and how they have contributed to Yemen's current explosive condition.

Drawing extensively on Arabic sources, many of which are not available in the English language, Rabi offers important analysis on the volatility of the state in Yemen. Based on freshly examined materials, this book is a vital reference of any examination of the country's twentieth-century history and its impact on the current unstable situation in the wider Middle East.

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