

book is a very challenging read due to the complexity of the author's ducatus, but ultimately an indispensable tool for better understanding Saudi Arabia.

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J.E. PETERSON (ed.):

*The Emergence of the Gulf States: Studies in Modern History.*

xvi, 388 pp. London: Bloomsbury Academic on behalf of Altajir Trust, 2016. £119.99. ISBN 978 1 472587602.

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Increasing academic interest in the history of the Indian Ocean region has generated further discourse on one of its north-western extensions, the Persian Gulf. David Commins, for instance, has authored *The Gulf States: A Modern History* (London, 2012), and Lawrence G. Potter has edited two recent volumes: *The Persian Gulf in History* (New York, 2009) and *The Persian Gulf in Modern Times: People, Ports, and History* (New York, 2014). Several contributors to Potter's two volumes, including Potter himself, Fahad Ahmad Bishara, James Onley and Daniel Potts, have also authored chapters for John Peterson's *The Emergence of the Gulf States: Studies in Modern History*. This edited volume, however, is more focused than Commins's and Potter's works. Largely excluding Iran and Iraq, it concentrates on the six Arab states that came to form the Gulf Cooperation Council: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Peterson also dedicates most space to the period from the eighteenth century until 1971, when the last states gained independence from Britain and "we enter a grey area between history and politics" (p. 6).

Peterson argues that the period between 1800 and 1971 "witnessed the greatest concentration of change in the region's long history" (p. 2). This is in contrast to many accounts that focus on the economic boom resulting from the rise in oil prices after 1973. Peterson writes that the "rapid transformation of the Gulf . . . began well before the impact of oil" (p. 6). His volume thus aims to "lay the essential foundation for understanding the emergence of the six states of the Arab littoral and the fundamental pillars on which their society and politics rest" (p. 2). In order to achieve this ambitious goal, the editor worked with four advisory editors: Bernhard Haykel, Frauke Heard-Bey, Mohammed al-Muqadam and James Piscatori. This group, together with representatives of the Altajir Trust (a charity founded by a former Ambassador of the UAE to Britain), then selected contributors from a variety of disciplines, including anthropology, archaeology, history, linguistics and political science. Most of these authors are based in the USA and Britain, despite the editor's "best efforts" (p. 6) to find historians from the Gulf. Whereas many other edited volumes (including Potter's two books) emerge from a single conference, support from the Altajir Trust allowed for two workshops in 2012 and 2014, in which the authors, the editor and his advisory editors developed the chapters. The result is a high-quality book, whose chapters are interlinked and better integrated into one overarching narrative than the subtitle *Studies in Modern History* might suggest.

The authors gathered by Peterson largely succeed in arguing for a profound transformation of Gulf societies between the late eighteenth and the late twentieth century. Michael Crawford contends that the sectarian tensions that surfaced after the Iranian Revolution in 1979 were the result of longer, differing trends in how Sunnis and Shia tackled clerical authority and its relationship with political power. Fahad Bishara and others note that

the Gulf's "increasing integration into the world economy" (p. 212) preceded the discovery of oil and was based on the growing demand for dates and pearls and the introduction of the steamship and the telegraph. These economic changes, as Hala Fattah explains in a subsequent chapter, also brought about the "emergence of detribalized or semi-tribalized migrants and labourers" (p. 256) in pearling and seafaring. Still, Frauke Heard-Bey argues that older sources of authority, such as tribal and Wahhabi traditions, determined the nature of the Gulf states to a greater extent than the British withdrawal in 1971. In the final chapter, Steffen Hertog concludes that societies in the region "shifted from statelessness or very weak states in the eighteenth century to comprehensive state dominance in the early twenty-first" (p. 348). Rather than being based on agriculture, he nevertheless maintains that nation-building was "oil-driven".

The close co-ordination of a group of senior Anglophone specialists has resulted in a very well-written, theoretically strong and yet accessible book. However, it has perhaps also contributed to a neglect of scholarship in languages other than English and of sub-disciplines not represented by any of the authors, such as environmental history. The bibliographical essays at the end of most chapters repeatedly mention well-known works such as Rosemarie Said Zahlan's *The Making of the Modern Gulf States: Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman* (London, 1989) and J.G. Lorimer's *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, 'Omān, and Central Arabia* (Calcutta, 1908, 1915). Yet these essays hardly discuss any publications in Arabic. A sub-chapter by Lawrence Potter on "Arabia and Iran" makes little reference to either Arabic or Persian texts in its bibliography. Among environmental historians, neither Benjamin James Reilly nor Toby Craig Jones are cited, leading to an oversight of the scarcity and management of fresh water as crucial factors in the history of the Arabian peninsula. Jones's book, *Desert Kingdom: How Oil and Water Forged Modern Saudi Arabia* (Cambridge, 2010), in particular, would have been very relevant for discussions about state-building.

Despite these shortcomings, *The Emergence of the Gulf States* is one of the best and most comprehensive books on the modern history of the region. Peterson went to great lengths to recruit some of the finest scholars in the field and ensured that their chapters build on, and speak to, one another. The result is a very inspiring, interesting and valuable reference work for both general readers and specialized researchers alike.

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SOUTH ASIA

R. SATHYANARAYANAN (ed.) (with an introduction by DOMINIC GOODALL): *Śaiva Rites of Expiation. A First Edition and Translation of Trilocanaśiva's Twelfth-century Prāyaścittasamuccaya*. (Collection Indologie 127.) 651 pp. Pondicherry: Institut français de Pondichéry and Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient, 2015. ISBN 978 81 8470 203 3.  
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In this welcome addition to the illustrious Collection Indologie of the Institut français de Pondichéry and Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient, R. Sathyanarayanan presents a first critical edition and annotated translation of the