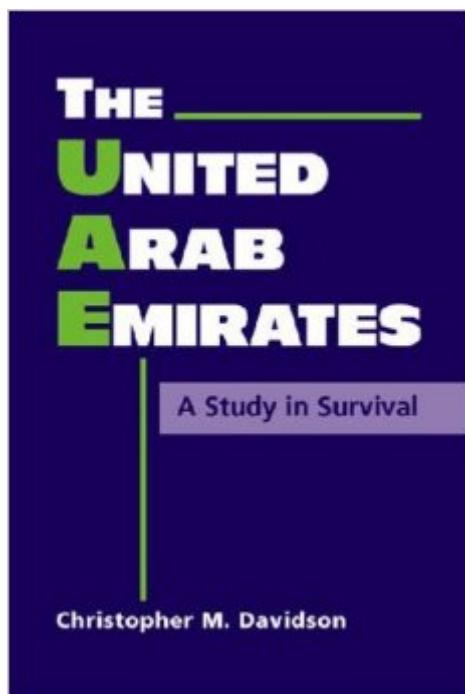


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The United Arab Emirates: A Study In Survival (Middle East In The International System)



Synopsis

The United Arab Emirates has remained a mainstay of stability in an increasingly volatile Middle East, managing to maintain a traditional polity despite the impact of rapid modernization and globalization. This in-depth study explores the many contradictions that characterize the UAE and its position within the international system. Davidson first provides a detailed historical background, tracing the recent history of the lower Gulf region, the British involvement in the area, and the establishment of the federation of emirates. He then turns his attention to the UAE's seemingly anachronistic political structure and its socioeconomic development. His astute analysis highlights the UAE's achievements, as well as the problems that have persistently undermined its development objectives.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The author has combined history with political science to make for something of a cutting edge book on one of the Gulf's most interesting countries. I just finished reading this, and being a veteran of the UAE for many years I found it to be very well researched with some extremely clever and original analysis, and in a completely different league to all previous books on the country.

Overall I thought the book was very well put together and achieves what the author set out to achieve. Based on my knowledge (personal and professional) it is an accurate reflection on the

UAE. However, two points I would like to make in relation to the book. First, while Davidson discusses the role Indians played in the early days of the UAE unfortunately they have been left out of modern developments. At the commercial level, expatriate Indians have been a very significant force in the overall development of the UAE. Second, Davidson wants to use quantity as an (almost) measure of quality. When he refers to the various public services available (notably hospitals and public schools) there are some questions about the quality of the services being provided, especially in some of the Emirates outside of Dubai and Abu Dhabi. But he does manage to capture and convey the dynamic and rapidly changing nature of the UAE.

As a researcher at a major New York financial firm I needed to quickly find information to help me begin to assess the risks of doing business in the U.A.E. Fortunately I came across a reference to this volume. I found it extremely useful for my work, providing me with substantial up-to-date information on the politics and economics of a country quite different from most I have studied. In particular, Dr. Davidson provided some answers to one of my initial questions about the U.A.E.--what holds this group of seven monarchies together? While the book could have benefited from more editing (it still reads like a doctoral dissertation) it is full of information and easy to use.

This is a very well put together book, and after reading it all the way through I realised it's the first time I have been able to fully understand why democracy has not taken root and, in the western sense at least, is unlikely to take root in the near future. The book is also very useful for showing how the rulers have desperately tried to diversify their economic base, and although most of the statistics only go up to 2004, this is easily the best book I have seen of the development of a Gulf state.

As an Emirati national living in Abu-Dhabi(Capital city) I found this book to have lot of questions that need to be answered. Certain statements the author made about the politics of the country had either no sources or the source was not good enough to make any just assumptions (most people interviewed were either from another city in the Emirates or people who were originally from Iran) I think to make it fair Dr. Chris should have spoken to UAE nationals from the UAE and taken their perspective. Overall I would rate it as average and most of its contents are not well sourced.

Well researched, with balanced arguments. Useful for people who have no vested interests and an unbiased view of the country. Clearly written by someone who has gained a deep knowledge of the

country and placed it in the global context.

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