

Saudi-Iranian Relations 1932-1982

Saeed M. Badeeb

SAUDI-IRANIAN RELATIONS 1932-1982



A detailed portrait of relations between two major Gulf states over a half-century. Drawing on sources in both Arabic and English, the author examines the ups and downs in the two countries relations in the political, religious, economic and military spheres. The book opens with a background analysis of the situation in the mid-1920s, when both Riza Shah of Iran and King Abd al-Aziz of what was to be Saudi Arabia were in the final stages of consolidating power and turning to the job of nation-building. The author then examines the two countries political systems, analysing the following topics: the role of the monarch, tribal and family ties, Sunni versus Shia Islam, the Wahhabi movement, regional government and political parties. The religious relationship is examined in detail, from the sending of Persian delegations to the holy shrines of Mecca and Madinah (which came under Saudi rule in the 1920s) to the recent disputes over Iranian pilgrims making the hajj. Since Saudi-Iranian economic relations are based almost entirely on oil, the book traces the history of oil exploration and production, and compares the two countries differing attitudes to its exploitation. The author concludes with a survey of the vital question of military relations, from Adb al-Aziz's use of the Ikhwan in uniting his kingdom, through the long-running dispute over Bahrain and the islands of Abu Musa and the Tunbs, to the issue of Gulf regional security and co-operation.

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