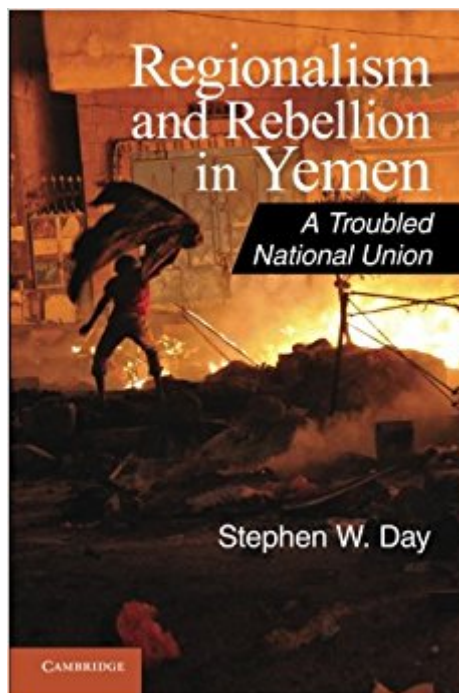




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Regionalism And Rebellion In Yemen: A Troubled National Union (Cambridge Middle East Studies)



Synopsis

Like other Arab revolutions in 2011, it is said that Yemen's rebellion was modeled on street protests in Tunis and Cairo. As this erudite new study explains, however, what happened in Yemen is far from being a mere echo of events elsewhere. In fact, the popular uprisings which came as a surprise in Tunisia and Egypt, Libya and Syria, were already well underway in Yemen. As early as 2007, this country on the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula was embroiled in sit-ins, demonstrations, and open rebellion against the government. The author ably demonstrates how Yemen's political upheaval is rooted in divisions and conflicts of the past, especially the country's troubled national unification in 1990. Based on years of in-depth field research, this book unravels the complexities of the Yemeni state and its domestic politics with a particular focus on the post-1990 years. The central thesis is that Yemen continues to suffer from regional fragmentation which has endured for centuries. En route the book discusses the rise of President Salih, his tribal and family connections, Yemen's civil war in 1994, the war's consequences later in the decade, the spread of radical movements after the US military response to 9/11, and finally developments leading to the historic events of 2011. Politics in this strategically important country is crucial for many reasons, not least on account of its links to al-Qaeda terrorism. The United States and western allies have good reason to regard Yemen as a security risk. This book sets a new standard for scholarship on Yemeni politics, and it is essential reading for anyone interested in the modern Middle East, the 2011 Arab revolts, and 21st century Islamic politics.

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Customer Reviews

I now feel like I know significant information about Yemen. Day's Introduction in itself is an education. After reading the chapters on regional divisions in Yemen, no wonder there were two revolutions. The great differences between north and south plus all the cultural and tribal histories of Yemen's 7 regions give solid insight to the complexities of the country. The added layer of British rule and the Ottoman Empire dominance makes American history look almost simple. The section on Salih's reign is another story of a dictator whose strategy is to divide an already contentious country and rule by intimidation and military power. That, of course, defeats national unity and strengthens regionalism. Learning Yemen's history makes Day's observation so apparent: "Analysts of Yemeni politics rarely give enough attention to the persistence of regional divisions as a source of ongoing political turmoil and economic mismanagement in the country. This is particularly true of Western counter-terrorism analysts who look at Yemen, and only see the threat of al-Qaeda." • Another quote: "The wounds inflicted by the 1994 civil war left deep scars across the face of the population. Just as the Yemeni landscape is scarred by impressive geological features, towering mountains and vast canyons, the Yemeni people have always been divided along regional lines." • That's not only a clear description, but almost poetic. Day's well written book offers several insightful and descriptive phrases. I realize it was written basically for the academy and students of the Middle East plus government types (who could profit greatly from digesting it), but it was written so well "in such narrative style" that people with no expertise on Yemen can enjoy it and learn a great deal about this complex area of the world. The historic section is very educational and the analysis quite instructive.

Great read

As a student of Dr. Stephen Day, I am somewhat biased. However, this is by far the most comprehensive and thorough analysis of the current state of affairs in Yemen. From the introduction to the last pages, I can safely say that I have not found any other text that contains near the level of critical analysis and expertise that Day exhibits. I recommend this to all interested in the diverse and integral country in our world today.

Sorry, can't recommend. As someone who lived in Yemen for several years, I was looking for something more insightful, perhaps. This did not fit the bill and I found it to be lacking nuance. Would have liked to see more research done.

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