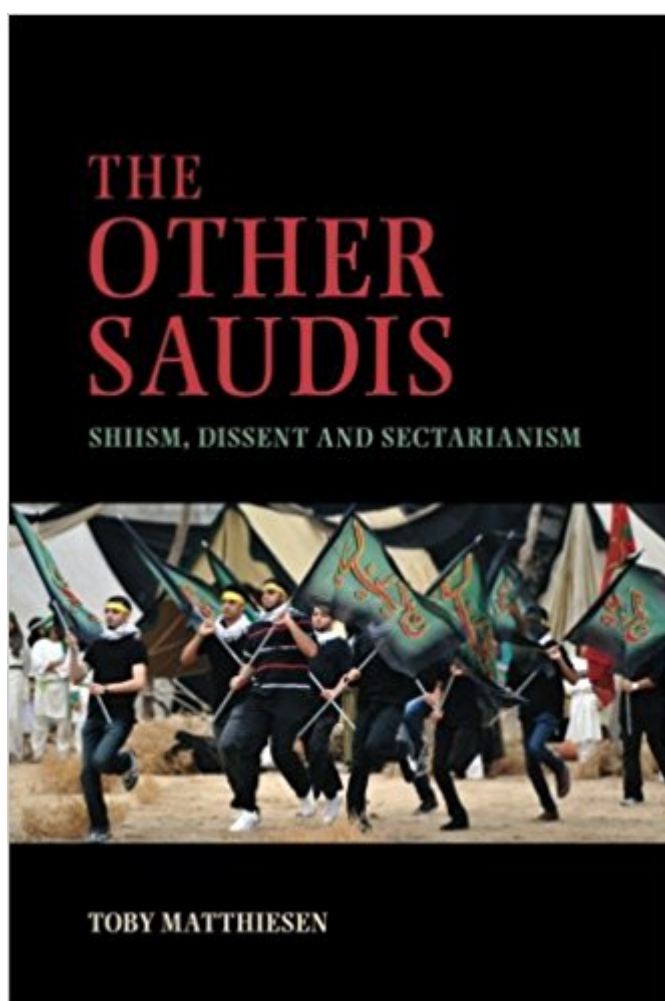


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The Other Saudis: Shiism, Dissent And Sectarianism (Cambridge Middle East Studies)



Synopsis

Toby Matthiesen traces the politics of the Shia in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia from the nineteenth century until the present day. This book outlines the difficult experiences of being Shia in a Wahhabi state, and casts new light on how the Shia have mobilised politically to change their position. Shia petitioned the rulers, joined secular opposition parties and founded Islamist movements. Most Saudi Shia opposition activists profited from an amnesty in 1993 and subsequently found a place in civil society and the public sphere. However, since 2011 a new Shia protest movement has again challenged the state. *The Other Saudis* shows how exclusionary state practices created an internal Other and how sectarian discrimination has strengthened Shia communal identities. The book is based on little-known Arabic sources, extensive fieldwork in Saudi Arabia and interviews with key activists. Of immense geopolitical importance, the oil-rich Eastern Province is a crucial but little known factor in regional politics and Gulf security.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"An extremely powerful analysis of the Shia of Saudi Arabia. Matthiesen lucidly moves between the past and the present with great linguistic and analytical skills that demonstrate panoramic knowledge and in-depth understanding of one of the most complex minority situations in the Arab world. His thoughtful historical account is matched by his familiarity with wider contemporary regional contexts and domestic politics." Madawi Al-Rasheed, London School of Economics and Political Science"Matthiesen skillfully fills in a large gap in the literature of Saudi Arabia as well as of

modern Muslim politics. Drawing on an impressive range of sources, he expertly documents both the enduring power of the regime and portentous transformations in communal identity and authority. This detailed and thoughtful study of the Kingdom's Shia will become the standard work on an increasingly important subject." James Piscatori, University of Durham

"Matthiesen's book is based on an impressive work of data collection. It mixes the analysis of previously unexploited archival material with fieldwork to offer an insightful and compelling picture of Shiism in Saudi Arabia. It definitely fills a vacuum in our knowledge of contemporary Shiism." Laurence Louër, Institut d'Etudes Politiques, Paris

"This sweeping history of the Shi'ites of Saudi Arabia immediately becomes a definitive account of their politics and social organization. Drawing on wide-ranging interviews inside and outside of Saudi Arabia, along with a wealth of novel documentary sources and political publications, Matthiesen presents a compelling account of the evolving relations between the Shi'ite community and the Saudi state, and of the Shi'ite networks that cross the Gulf and the region." Marc Lynch, The Washington Post's Monkey Cage blog

"[This book] is helpful in understanding some of the current problems in Saudi Arabia, the leading regional ally of choice of the United States." Cosmopolis

"The Other Saudis is an important, if not indispensable, guide to one of the least understood but most influential countries of the Middle East, a region that is coming apart in the midst of sectarian conflicts and civil wars." Ray Takeyh, Survival

"The Other Saudis makes an original contribution to scholarship on the modern history and politics of Shi'a in Saudi Arabia and the Middle East and provides abundant evidence for further analytical work on sectarianism." David Commins, The American Historical Review

"This book is particularly timely given the resurgent importance (rightly or wrongly) attached to sectarian politics throughout the region. Most importantly, it situates this sectarianism within the broader economic and political contexts of the Saudi kingdom, and explains its function and utility in the larger project of shaping Saudi national identity... there is little doubt that this is a valuable contribution to the field and required reading for all serious historians of the modern Middle East." Alexander Khaleeli, Journal of Shi'a Islamic Studies

"Matthiesen's excellent volume is an objective historical analysis of the Twelver Shi'ah, largely in the Eastern Province, and to a much lesser extent ... of the Isma'ili's in Najran." Anthony McRoy, The Muslim World Book Review

This accessible scholarly work traces the regional politics of the Shia in the Eastern Province of Sunni-dominated Saudi Arabia since the nineteenth century. The first book in English on the topic, it casts new light on the survival strategies and political mobilization of the Shia community as it confronts the repressive machinery of the Saudi regime.

The Other Saudis provides its readers with rich and thorough information and background about the Shia in the Current SAUDI Arabia. This book is helpful for any person who would like to understand how the other Saudis live and aspire for equal rights and freedom. It is also helpful for those who would like to know what would be the future of Saudi Arabia in the coming decade. The other Saudis are least known outstanding of the KSA and the author was successful in bringing what appeared to be a silent minority into the international community.

Very detailed informative book that is based on Arabic sources. I was surprised for several times of the much of details written by a non-Qatifi person. Highly recommended for those who have researches or interested about Shia in Saudi Arabia.

Book is very plodding. It needs a timeline and charts to keep people and groups straight

This is a brilliant book, well-researched and well-written. It is also objective and a great read.

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