



The History of Saudi Arabia (The Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations)

Wayne H. Bowen

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Modern Saudi Arabia is a nation struggling to adopt its eighteenth-century political and religious system to the demands of the new millennium. Governed by an absolute monarchy, the Saudi state confronts the multiple challenges of globalization with a cautiousness that has characterized its modern history. Unlike in most previous centuries, when events in the peninsula were of little note outside the Islamic world, Arabia is presently a state of critical importance. With the largest share of the world's proven petroleum reserves, a dominant role in OPEC, key political and geographic terrain in the Middle East, the international prominence that comes with controlling the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, and a major role in promoting fundamentalist Wahhabi Islam, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is arguably more significant and relevant to the world than at any time in its history, at least since the lifetime of the Prophet Mohammed during the sixth and seventh centuries. This book examines the history of Saudi Arabia and its attempts to transform to the new world while maintaining its past.

Ideal for students and general readers, *The History of Saudi Arabia* is part of **The Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations** series. With the histories of nearly 40 nations in print, these books provide readers with a concise, up-to-date history of countries throughout the world. Reference features include a biographical section highlighting famous figures in Saudi Arabian history, a timeline of important historical events, a glossary of terms, and a bibliographical essay with suggestions for further reading.

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