

The Yemeni Civil War

The Arab Spring, State formation and internal instability

by Elham Manea

DESCRIPTION:

This book suggests an innovative theoretical framework to understand the meltdown and civil wars of countries such as Yemen, Syria, and Libya after their 2011 uprisings, using Yemen as a case study. The interaction between different types of state formation and regional rivalry can explain, respectively, the civil wars of these countries and the preservation of the Bahraini system, despite its ethnic nature.

The analysis works on two interconnected levels: First, an internal level focusing on the state formation of the country in question; and second, a regional level examining the operational context within which each country functions, and the type of actors involved in its political affairs.

The recurrent instability in Yemen has been a result of overlapping group grievances repeatedly rising to the surface. This reflects a process of different attempts at state formation that ultimately failed to produce a modern state, along with core elites defined by (and at the same time exploiting) ethnic markers, perpetually infighting throughout Yemeni history. These three elements-tensions between groups, unsuccessful state formations, and the ethnic markers of its elites-stand at the core of the Yemeni dilemma. This book is based on original archival research and more than 100 interviews conducted by the author with all parties of the Yemeni Civil War and with other regional actors.

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Elham Manea is a titular professor of political science at Zurich University. Her research focuses on regional politics of the Arabian Peninsula, fragile states in conflict zones in the MENA region, especially Yemen, women under Muslim laws, and political Islam. She is of dual nationalities, Yemeni and Swiss.

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