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Thomas Höhne-Sparborth

Social Change in Saudi Arabia: Regime, Religion, and the People

Politically and socially, Saudi Arabia appears to be a country frozen in time. Although leaders and citizens alike now sing to the common tune of reform, the Saudi regime's authoritarianism seems to remain firmly in place. Nevertheless, this paper argues that the royal family may be more favourably disposed to social change than previously assumed, because Wahhabism's exclusivist message has in fact become less of an asset and more of a liability to the regime. However, this social change will have to come through a slow-pace, bottom-up process.

Saudi Arabia, Wahhabism, Reform, Social Change, Authoritarianism, Social Pluralism

Dr. Elham Manea

The Arab State and Women's Rights: The Case of Saudi Arabia. The Limits of the Possible

In this paper, the author uses the case of Saudi Arabia to highlight some elements of her hypothesis that the decisive factor for the policy of Arab states towards women is which kind of social group the political elites in the respective countries rely and depend on. The paper focuses on the Saudi state's traditional base of power, which social groups it depends on to retain power, and how this has a direct bearing on the situation of Saudi women.

Saudi Arabia, Women's Rights, Political Elites, Family Law, Sex Segregation

Loay Mudhoon

Saudi-Arabiens Rolle im regionalen Kontext

This paper provides a short overview about the current political role of Saudi Arabia in the region. It touches the relevant fields in which Saudi Arabia is involved, such as oil and energy security, the dialogue with the Christian world and the rather aggravating relation with Shiism, the alliance with the USA, and the geo-political ambitions and possibilities of the kingdom. Furthermore, the pressing topic of domestic reform is discussed.

Saudi Arabia, Geo-Politics, Dialogue of the Religions, Energy Security, Oil

Prof. Dr. Roman Loimeier

Ta d+d oder IÒIÁÎ: Eine Analyse islamischer Reformbewegungen im subsaharischen Afrika

This paper examines the comparability of religious reform movements by posing the question under which historical and social conditions religious reform movements develop similar alignments, arguments and strategies, and why, despite this, reform movements with the same religious alignment have different temporal “take-offs” in different societies. This question is addressed in light of the comparison of the different Islamic reform movements in East Africa, Senegal and North Nigeria in the 20th Century.

Religion, Sub-Saharan Africa, Reform, Comparability, Islamic Reform, Senegal, Nigeria

Dr. Frank Peter

Politische Rationalitäten, Terrorismusbekämpfung und Islampolitik im Vereinigten Königreich und Frankreich

This article examines French and British policies that aim at the incorporation and regulation of Islam. These measures are primarily analyzed on their decisive role in the fight against terrorism and urban violence. The analysis uses the concept of “Political Rationalities“ to identify a strategy of counter-terrorism that is not based on surveillance and exclusion, but involves the Muslims themselves.

Counter-Terrorism, Political Rationalities, Muslim Minorities, Muslims in Europe, France, United Kingdom, Urban Violence, Terrorism, Integration, Islam Policy