

if they were the sole representative of the whole Cyprus, has undermined the EU's leverage over the Greek Cypriot elites before the Annan plan was even put to a referendum. This is also a major reason for the deepening and continued intractability of the conflict.

Chapter 7 concentrates on the 2004 referendum as the mechanism for adoption of the proposed consociational state. This chapter provides two divergent case studies of the North and South of Cyprus. It demonstrates that the same issues triggered different responses by each community. Consequently, it explains the Annan Plan's ultimate rejection. The author underlines that for Turkish Cypriots, the Annan Plan would provide a greater degree of transparency and democracy. However, the Greek Cypriots do not see the same positive gains from the Plan because for the past two generations the Greek Cypriot elites have told their community that such a solution would bring a return to the pre-1974 situation. In addition, the Greek Cypriot elites have made it clear to their constituencies that since they are now an EU member State, they are the dominant if not the sole representatives of the internationally recognised state of Cyprus.

The reviewer remains, however, sceptical about the longer-term consequences of what this book proposes. The author points out that a great number of changes needed for a consociational political settlement to be successfully adopted in Cyprus would only take place after both communities reach a broader societal and political level of maturity. Therefore, the main weakness of the book is that it does not attempt to offer an explanation, nor explain how to create 'new' conditions which will facilitate the adoption of such a consociational constitutional model that will be the most likely structure of governance for a reunified Cyprus.

On the whole, it can be said that the book accurately reflects the specific aim of analysing political settlements between Cyprus' two divided societies and the theory of consociationalism addressed in the corresponding chapters. This book is an attempt to find out why political elites in Cyprus are so unwilling to adopt a power-sharing solution, although it is technically not the only one form of consociationalism. The book presents new material for the wider debate regarding consociational constitutional design and peace plans in divided societies.

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Saudi-Iranian Relations since the Fall of Saddam

By *Frederic Wehrey, Theodore Karasik, Alireza Nader, Jeremy Ghez, Lydia Hansell, Robert Guffey*

Santa Monica CA: Rand Corporation 2009, 130pp., ISBN 9780833046574, \$26.00.

This slim volume examines a relationship that is pivotal for the stability of the Gulf and the wider Arab world and has major implications for Lebanon, Iraq, the

Arab-Israeli conflict and the position of the US in the region. It was compiled by a team of RAND researchers who conducted a very considerable survey of secondary and news-

paper literature and undertook a wide range of interviews in the Arab Gulf, although not in Iran. It is reasonable and balanced and provides a lot of valuable empirical information organized in a coherent framework, similar to the conflict resolution oriented work of the International Crisis Group.

The background of the geo-political rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia is spelled out in detail. Tehran regards Saudi Arabia as a US proxy and buffer against its rightful Gulf primacy. The Saudis fear Iran's greater size and see Iranian influence in post-Saddam Iraq, Iran's nuclear aspirations, and its triumph in the battle for Arab public opinion during the 2006 Lebanon war as shifting the balance of power against them. They are also incensed that Iran has won over the Sunni Hamas movement and intervened in the Palestine conflict, which they consider an Arab issue. Iraq is seen as an arena of zero-sum proxy competition, with the Saudis trying to forge their own ties with Sunni opponents of the Shia-dominated government. Unable to match Iran's influence, the Saudis want the US to remain in Iraq to balance against Iran, a view at odds with Arab nationalism that Iran seeks to exploit. The two states' backing of different sides in Lebanon and Iraq became aspects of a region-wide Iran-Saudi proxy conflict, with many key states in the region lining up on one side or the other and the US encouraging Saudi Arabia to counter Iranian influence.

Their Shia-Sunni identity differences do not, the authors argue, drive their rivalry but are rather tools they exploit or are sometimes constraints on policy-makers. Nevertheless their exploitation of identity has to a degree constructed a Sunni-Shia cleavage across the region. Iran's advantage is playing the militant nationalist card on the US

role in the region and over Palestine, which embarrasses the Saudis before Arab public opinion. Although Iran tries to use all-Islamic and anti-imperialist discourses and to mute the sectarian discourse that could isolate it from the Arab Middle East, it also exploits its ties to the Shia communities in Lebanon, Iraq and the Gulf against Sunni regimes. To counter Iran and Syria in Lebanon the Saudis funded militant Sunni salafi groups against Hizbollah. The monarchy also hit on using the anti-Shia discourse of the Wahabi clergy as a way of countering Iran's nationalist discourse regionally and diluting criticism at home of its alignment with the US. The Saudis deploy their superior financial resources, used for example in Lebanon, while their control of pan-Arab media has evoked the notion of an Iranian Shia threat to the Sunni Arab world.

However, the identity card can backfire on both sides: thus, the 2006 war split the Saudis with some of the Sahwa clergy seeing the monarchy's stance against Hizbollah as a failure to support the Islamic cause against Israel and the US. But Shia terror against Sunnis in Iraq subsequently cost Iran a lot of the gains it made in region-wide Sunni Arab opinion during the Lebanon conflict, and Saudi clerics, including the dissident Sahwa group, met with Sunni Iraqi clerics to express solidarity against Sunni displacement in Iraq by the Shia militias.

The Saudi-Iranian rivalry is also cross-cut by counter-tendencies that leave a much more nuanced pattern of relations. Saudi policy towards Iran depends, according to one Saudi interviewee, on the area and issue: containment in Iraq and rollback in the Levant, but engagement in the Gulf. Saudi Arabia and Iran have sought to reach mutual agreements to contain the fallout of their rivalry, notably to mute tensions

in Lebanon. In the Gulf, there are common interests in stability that limit tensions. The invitation to Ahmadenejad to attend the Hajj in 2008 was an effort to bridge the gap by the Saudis, especially when they feared the US might leave them exposed by making its own deal with Iran. While some Saudi sources speak of a nuclear Iran as an existential threat, the Saudis have also publicly rejected a US attack on it, fearing the resulting chaos more than Iran's possible acquisition of a bomb, but also taking care not to be seen encouraging such an attack before Arab opinion. The authors claim that the Saudis have not been unified on how to deal with Iran, with Prince Bandar bin Sultan leading the anti-Iran camp and trying to co-ordinate with the US to build a regional consensus against Iran, while Prince Turki bin Faysal resigned as US ambassador in protest at this; King Abdullah is seen as mediating on the issue. The Gulf Cooperation Council is not uniformly with Saudi Arabia and actually most of the Gulf states balance Saudi Arabia with ties to both Iran and the US, with Qatar and Oman even actively balancing against the Saudis.

The authors warn the US against think-

ing it can use Saudi Arabia as a proxy in its conflict with Iran and point out that Saudi policy is to hedge its bets; particularly, US attempts to get the Saudis to make access to their energy market a tool to pressure China and Europe to pull out of Iran are likely to fail. The authors urge the US to work toward a more cooperative Gulf security arrangement that includes Iran; yet they acknowledge that the Saudis and other Arab Gulf states prefer the outside US balancer/protector to a security arrangement in cooperation with larger regional states. Since much of their perception of threat from Iran is a mirror of their own domestic insecurity, the authors conclude that internal reform is also needed to enhance their security.

The only thing the authors appear to have got wrong was their belief that Saudi Arabia would continue to try to isolate Syria. All in all, this is a remarkably balanced and informed analysis and it would be nice to think that the policy-makers for whom it is intended will listen to its sensible recommendations.

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Muslim Laws, Politics and Society in Modern Nation States

By *Ihsan Yilmaz*

Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2005. 248 pp., ISBN 0754643891.

In this book, the author focuses on Muslim people's social and legal situation and their legal attitudes from various points of view. The book has eight chapters: "Law, Politics and Society in the Post-Modern Condition"; "Dynamic Legal Pluralism, Muslim Legal Pluralisms; Muslim Legal Pluralism in

England"; "Muslim Legal Pluralism in Turkey"; "Muslim Legal Pluralism in Pakistan"; "Post-Modern Muslim Legality and its Consequences"; and "Looking to the Future".

The author uses case studies from three different, but relevant, countries: the United Kingdom (UK), Turkey, and Pakistan. The