

Political system

[Science](#), [Social Science](#)



The role of oil and Islam in Arab countries Islam constitutes a source of both legitimacy and illegitimacy to some Arab regimes”, discuss this statement”

The established role of Islam in Middle East societies has contributed towards most regime’s desire to control the religious sphere. The regimes acknowledge the probable danger of Islamists movement and the need to harness resources of the religion to meet state’s objectives. Islam is a key unifying element amongst regimes. Mobilization of Islam was key in the inception of Saudi state (Gilley 53). The throwback of Wahhabi doctrine’s role pioneered the embrace of Islam culture that later absorbed the religious establishments with the transformation of ulema to state employees. The process boosts the degree of loyalty. The Iranian Shia authorities question the Saudi’s regime legitimacy.

The Saudi rule prioritizes its position as superior to Iran with the maintenance of its economic, security sectors and protection of the GCC monarchies. The situation is evident in the recent riots in Bahrain (Gilley 64). Political marginalization by Islam may become impossible due to the pressure on the Islamic community by their regimes. The political regimes intend to consolidate Islam legitimacy triggering a direct response to the regime. The unifying force of Islam was demonstrated in Middle East by the rising state opposition that poses a serious threat to state security. The situation made Islam a major opposing force and significant political challenge.

2. How has the discovery of oil affected state-building in Saudi Arabia?

Oil is the key contributor to the economy of Saudi Arabia whose revenue majorly contributes to state building. Construction of Saudi Aramco, an

excellent national oil champion is evidence of the contribution of oil in state building. Oil has led to the establishment of a modern capital market, reforms in labor policy and the surge of foreign investors into the country. The liberalizing economic reforms changed political and social structures of the oil-rich state (Herttog 53).

The Saudi Arabian kingdom has a robust public infrastructure that has created an attractive investment climate for investors. Furthermore, the kingdom has invested in architecture. Secondly, it has invested a lot of money in key industries around the world. As a result, it has emerged as a key regional and economic player (Herttog 53). The Saudi Arabian regime has leveraged its oil resources to attract powerful international allies. In addition, it plays a major role in the Middle East region. However, the need for oil has prevented its key allies such as the United States from criticizing its poor human rights record and ill treatment of women.

Works Cited

Herttog, Steffen. Princes, Brokers, and Bureaucrats: Oil and the State in Saudi Arabia. New

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Gilley, Bruce. The Determinants of State Legitimacy: Results for 72 Countries. International

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