

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910811131003321
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Titolo	Princes, brokers, and bureaucrats [[electronic resource] ] : oil and the state in Saudi Arabia // Steffen Hertog
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Ithaca, : Cornell University Press, 2010
ISBN	0-8014-7751-4 0-8014-5877-3
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (311 p.)
Disciplina	330.9538/05
Soggetti	Petroleum industry and trade - Government policy - Saudi Arabia Economic development - Political aspects - Saudi Arabia Bureaucracy - Saudi Arabia Patron and client - Saudi Arabia Saudi Arabia Economic policy Saudi Arabia Politics and government
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Preface -- Acronyms -- Dramatis Personae -- Introduction -- 1. Unpacking the Saudi State -- Part I: Oil and History -- 2. Oil Fiefdoms in Flux: The New Saudi State in the 1950's -- 3. The Emerging Bureaucratic Order under Faisal -- 4. The 1970's Boom -- Part II: Policy-Making in Segmented Clientelism -- 5. The Foreign Investment Act -- 6. Eluding the "Saudization" of Labor Markets -- 7. The Fragmented Domestic Negotiations over WTO Adaptation -- 8. Comparing the Case Studies, Comparing Saudi Arabia -- References -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	In Princes, Brokers, and Bureaucrats, the most thorough treatment of the political economy of Saudi Arabia to date, Steffen Hertog uncovers an untold history of how the elite rivalries and whims of half a century ago have shaped today's Saudi state and are reflected in its policies. Starting in the late 1990's, Saudi Arabia embarked on an ambitious reform campaign to remedy its long-term economic stagnation. The results have been puzzling for both area specialists and political economists: Saudi institutions have not failed across the board, as

theorists of the "rentier state" would predict, nor have they achieved the all-encompassing modernization the regime has touted. Instead, the kingdom has witnessed a bewildering mélange of thorough failures and surprising successes. Hertog argues that it is traits peculiar to the Saudi state that make sense of its uneven capacities. Oil rents since World War II have shaped Saudi state institutions in ways that are far from uniform. Oil money has given regime elites unusual leeway for various institutional experiments in different parts of the state: in some cases creating massive rent-seeking networks deeply interwoven with local society; in others large but passive bureaucracies; in yet others insulated islands of remarkable efficiency. This process has fragmented the Saudi state into an uncoordinated set of vertically divided fiefdoms. Case studies of foreign investment reform, labor market nationalization and WTO accession reveal how this oil-funded apparatus enables swift and successful policy-making in some policy areas, but produces coordination and regulation failures in others.

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