

# Delve into the Nexus of Saudi and Syrian Policies: A Journey Through Turbulent Times

The Middle East, a region imbued with a vibrant tapestry of cultures and histories, has been the stage for tumultuous events that have shaped the global landscape. Amidst this volatile terrain, the policies of two pivotal nations, Saudi Arabia and Syria, have played a significant role in shaping the destiny of the region. This article delves into the complexities of Saudi and Syrian policies, exploring their motivations, objectives, and the profound impact they have had on the region and beyond.

## Saudi Arabia: A Conservative Powerhouse

Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of Islam and home to the holiest sites in the Muslim world, stands as a dominant force in the Middle East. Its immense oil wealth has fueled its rise to prominence, granting it significant influence on regional and global affairs. Saudi Arabia's policies are guided by a conservative interpretation of Islamic law, known as Wahhabism, which emphasizes strict adherence to religious principles. This conservative outlook has shaped Saudi Arabia's domestic and foreign policies, often leading to a cautious and risk-averse approach.



## Threats and Alliances in the Middle East: Saudi and Syrian Policies in a Turbulent Region by May Darwich

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## **Domestic Policies**

Within its bFree Downloads, Saudi Arabia maintains a tightly controlled society, where religious and social norms are strictly enforced. The government exercises significant control over the media, education, and religious institutions, ensuring that the conservative values of Wahhabism permeate all aspects of life. Saudi Arabia's strict gender segregation, limitations on freedom of speech, and harsh punishments for crimes have drawn criticism from human rights organizations.

## **Foreign Policy**

Saudi Arabia's foreign policy has been characterized by a cautious and pragmatic approach, prioritizing stability and the preservation of the status quo. The country has forged close alliances with Western powers, particularly the United States, and has played a significant role in regional organizations such as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Saudi Arabia has also been a major supplier of oil to the global market, giving it significant economic leverage on the world stage.

## **Syria: A Crucible of Conflict**



Syria, a nation with a rich cultural heritage and a complex history, has endured decades of political turmoil and conflict. The country's strategic location at the crossroads of the Middle East has made it a focal point for regional and global powers. Syria's policies have been shaped by a mix of Arab nationalism, socialism, and a strong commitment to secularism.

### **Domestic Policies**

Under the rule of the Assad family, Syria pursued a socialist-oriented economic model, with the government playing a dominant role in key sectors of the economy. The government also maintained a strong security apparatus, often suppressing dissent and limiting political freedoms. However, in the face of growing popular discontent and regional instability, Syria has gradually moved towards a more market-oriented economy while maintaining tight control over political life.

## **Foreign Policy**

Syria's foreign policy has been influenced by its commitment to Arab nationalism and its opposition to Western imperialism. The country has been a staunch supporter of the Palestinian cause and has played an active role in regional conflicts, including the Arab-Israeli wars and the Lebanese civil war. Syria's close ties with Iran and Hezbollah have further complicated its relationship with the West.

## **Clash of Visions: Saudi-Syrian Rivalry**

The contrasting policies of Saudi Arabia and Syria have often led to tensions and rivalry between the two countries. Saudi Arabia's conservative outlook and close ties with the West have placed it at odds with Syria's secular nationalism and alliance with Iran. The competition for regional influence has further exacerbated the divide, with both countries seeking to assert their dominance in the Middle East.

## **Proxy Wars and Sectarian Conflicts**

The Saudi-Syrian rivalry has played out in proxy wars and sectarian conflicts across the region. Saudi Arabia has supported Sunni Muslim groups, while Syria has backed Shia Muslim forces, fueling tensions between these two major branches of Islam. The Syrian civil war, which erupted in 2011, became a focal point of this rivalry, with Saudi Arabia backing anti-Assad rebel groups while Syria received support from Iran and Hezbollah.

## **Regional Instability and Global Implications**

The Saudi-Syrian rivalry has contributed to the ongoing instability in the Middle East. The proxy wars and sectarian conflicts have fueled violence

and displacement, creating a humanitarian crisis that has spilled over into neighboring countries and beyond. The rivalry has also complicated international efforts to resolve regional conflicts and address the rise of extremist groups.

The policies of Saudi Arabia and Syria have had a profound impact on the Middle East and the wider world. Saudi Arabia's conservative approach and global influence have shaped regional dynamics, while Syria's quest for stability and its complex foreign policy have contributed to regional conflicts and instability. The rivalry between these two nations has fueled proxy wars and sectarian strife, creating a complex and volatile landscape.

Understanding the motivations, objectives, and consequences of Saudi and Syrian policies is essential for navigating the intricate challenges facing the Middle East. As these countries continue to navigate the turbulent waters of the region, their policies will continue to play a pivotal role in shaping the destiny of the Middle East and beyond.



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by May Darwich

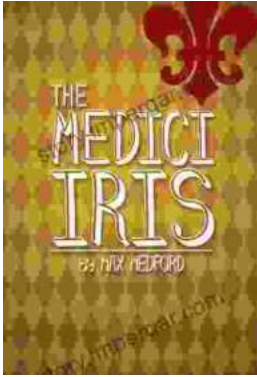
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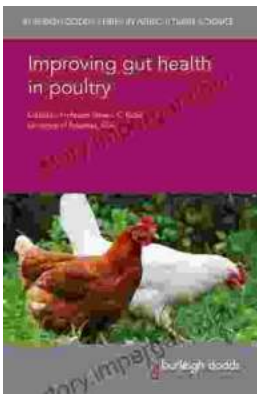
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