



## Saudi Arabia and Iran: Friends or Foes?

By Banafsheh Keynoush

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The mesmerizing story of two countries caught in history whose rivalry can destroy the world or restore its peace, this is the first book to untangle the complex relationship of Saudi Arabia and Iran by rejecting heated rhetoric and looking at the real roots of the issue to promise pathways to peace.

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## **Editorial Review**

### **Review**

From a Norwegian foreign affairs vantage point, where balancing a reputation as international peacemaker, giant oil producer, and close US ally is the main task, this book offers a refreshing view of the strategic importance of allowing Iran and Saudi Arabia to regain a balanced partnership in pursuit of security and lower ideological tensions. . . a carefully argued revelation.' – Tone Bleie, Professor, University of Tromsø, Norway, and Director of the International Research Group on Reintegration of Ex-Combatants (IRGR)

'Dr. Keynoush's book makes a timely intervention towards understanding the delicately poised Saudi-Iranian relationship. Extensively researched and historically nuanced in approach, it provides a much needed corrective to studies that view the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran through the sectarian prism in the main. By foregrounding the role of external actors like the United States in the region, and the shifting logic of power politics, the analysis effectively reframes a relationship that remains critical to the stability and security of the Persian Gulf region. A welcome addition to the literature on contemporary politics and international diplomacy, the book ought to be read by students and policy makers of the Middle East.' – Ayesha Jalal, Mary Richardson Professor of History and Director, Center for South Asian and Indian Ocean Studies, Tufts University, USA, and author of *The Struggle for Pakistan: A Muslim Homeland and Global Politics*

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### **From the Back Cover**

In a riveting narrative based on accounts of her interactions with Saudi and Iranian politicians and rich archival material, a leading scholar on the Middle East unravels the mysteries of a contentious relationship. This seasoned observer of political and diplomatic worlds shatters the myth of the inevitability of sectarian conflict and that the diplomacy between Saudi Arabia and Iran is exhausted. Instead, Banafsheh Keynoush

argues in Saudi Arabia and Iran: Friends or Foes? that it has yet to be explored, by recasting the partnership from a US-centered point of view to one based on how Saudi Arabia and Iran see their roles. Who is to blame and how to fix it is part of this penetrating historic account which captivates readers through accurate, non-sensational, and objective analysis. Keynoush recounts it all: the fears, misunderstandings, prejudices, and ambitions that have hobbled efforts to build a lasting partnership, creating a work that is important to both the expert and the layperson.

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