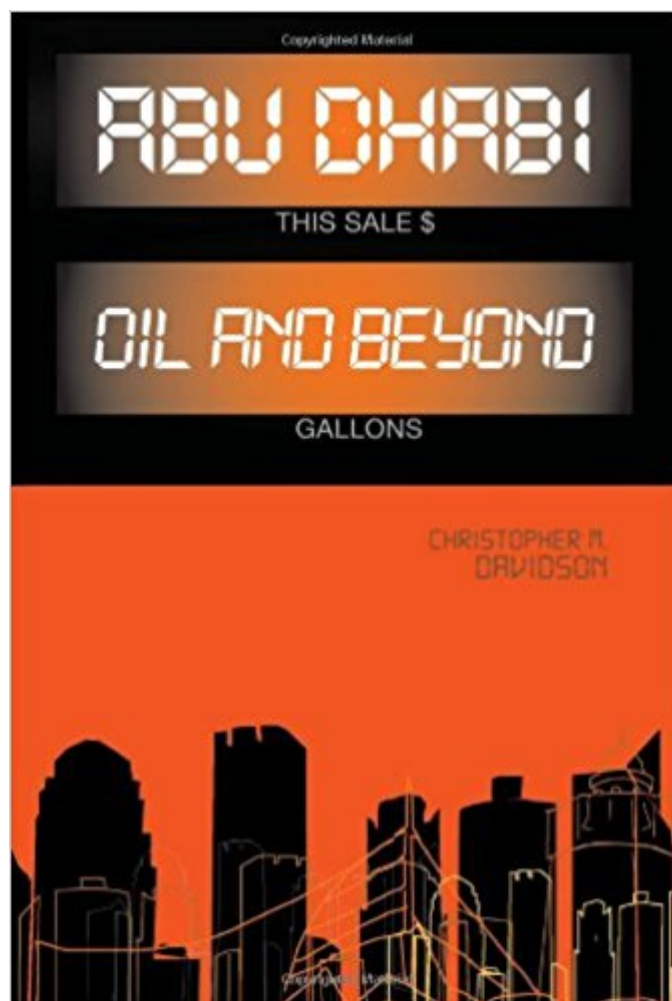


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Abu Dhabi: Oil And Beyond



Synopsis

A rising economic power, Abu Dhabi, the capital city of the United Arab Emirates, is poised to become a major player in the fortunes of both Third and First World countries. Abu Dhabi owns more than 8 percent of the world's oil reserves, has close to one trillion dollars to invest in sovereign wealth funds, and is about to implement a masterful set of economic initiatives that will yield even greater returns. Abu Dhabi has begun to eclipse its partner city, Dubai, in terms of sheer wealth and cultural and infrastructural development, opening the world's first Ferrari theme park and erecting satellite branches of the Guggenheim and the Louvre. Author of the best-selling *Dubai: The Vulnerability of Success* and an expert on Gulf politics, Christopher M. Davidson tracks Abu Dhabi's remarkable growth from a modest, eighteenth-century sheikhdom to its present opulent state. He recounts the dramatic efforts made by the emirate's dynastic family to retain their power, detailing the system of "tribal capitalism" they created in order to reconcile old political allegiances with modern engines of growth. Davidson concludes with potential challenges to Abu Dhabi's political and economic success, including a weakening of civil society, invasive media censorship, an ongoing labor crisis, increasing federal unrest, and persistent underperformance in the education sector.

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Customer Reviews

Specialists and non-specialists will be treated to a critical yet deeply sympathetic account of the *raison d'être* and very identity of the emirate, past and present. (Eva-Maria Nag Times Higher

Education)Davidson's book provides an excellent overview with a good balance of history and contemporary and future issues. (Christopher Sell Middle East Interational)Meticulously researched... [Abu Dhabi] provides both a solid historical and social background of the UAE capital and a detailed snapshot of its current economic and political situation. (Middle East Policy Journal)A tour de force.... the narrative is excellent, the style is highly readable and the information by and large is priceless. (Jean-Francois Seznec International Affairs 1900-01-00)

Abu Dhabi is a fine combination of history, anthropology, economics, and political science. The best thing I have yet read on the country, adequately portraying its strengths while also pointing to its critical shortcomings. (Robert Springborg, Naval Postgraduate School)

As a CEO for 30 years in the GCC--transferring technology in food, medicine, and high tech--I found Davidson's book the best source of profound analysis on the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. He offers a highly detailed tribal analysis of "who's who" which is a labyrinthine task in and of itself, but goes to the heart of the matter of why one player is more important than others based on tribal relations. I have a library of books, and this rates as my top recommendation.

This is an excellent book, and is full of well-integrated information about the background to the ruling, and other, families, their role in the current super-development effort, and a general picture of the UAE. It is balanced and factual. Not often do westerners try to understand the culture of the Middle East. I appreciated that the writer understands that Western democracy is only one form of broad governance, and by no means the only one.

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