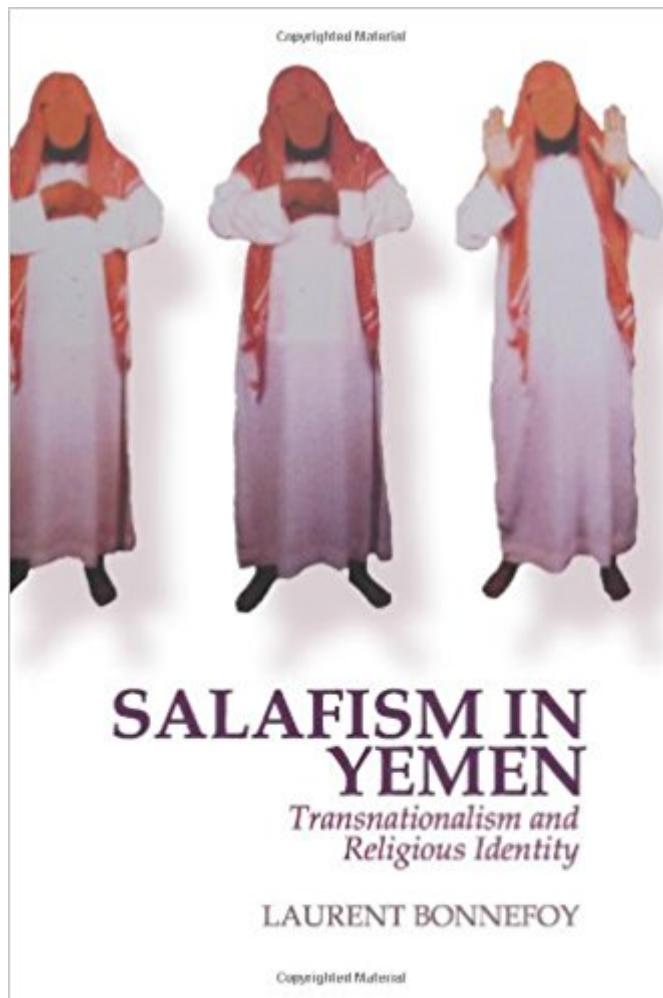


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Salafism In Yemen: Transnationalism And Religious Identity



Synopsis

Over the last decade or so Salafism has become one of the West's new political bogey-men. Many regard the movement as the antechamber of violent groups such as al-Qaeda, and as the by-product of a centralized foreign-policy platform shaped by so-called Saudi interests. Based on extensive research conducted throughout Yemen between 2001 and 2009, and particularly in the southern province of Yafi', this book offers an original approach to Salafism and draws a necessary counter-narrative that takes into account the dynamics of the Salafi movement as well as its relationship to its evolving environment, either local, regional and international. Having studied over a hundred recorded sermons and conferences and dozens of books, and carried out interviews with numerous clerics, intellectuals and activists, Laurent Bonnefoy focuses on the allegedly apolitical Salafi doctrine promoted by the renowned Yemeni Salafi figure, Muqbil al-Wadi'i, who died in 2001. Building on IR theory and political sociology, he references the everyday practices of al-Wadi'i's dedicated followers, their rivalries as well as their own evolving trajectories. He demonstrates that, rather than resulting from specifically planned policies, Yemeni Salafism has, since the early 1980s, evolved through a series of spontaneous, grassroots mechanisms, many of which are shaped by transnational flows, that embed this movement in the complex Yemeni context.

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