

# Constitutions in a Nonconstitutional World: Arab Basic Laws and the Prospects for Accountable Government (Suny Series in Middle Eastern Studies)

Nathan J. Brown

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Uses the Arab experience to explain the appeal of constitutional documents to authoritarian political regimes.

The collapse of authoritarian regimes and the global resurgence of liberal democracy has led to a renewed interest in constitutions and constitutionalism among scholars and political activists alike. This book uses the Arab experience to explain the appeal of constitutional documents to authoritarian regimes and assesses the degree to which such constitutions can be used in the effort to make the regimes more accountable.

"Brown understands how law fits in with the burning issues of Middle Eastern politics. He demonstrates how rulers can use lawand constitutions to strengthen their rule, while most of the existing literature focuses on how they restrict central power. This is particularly interesting in light of the last ten years of liberalization in the Third World, where rulers in Africa, for example, have had to figure out how to meet International Monetary Fund demands for a degree of political liberalization without actually giving up power." -- Jill Crystal, author of Oil and Politics in the Gulf: Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar



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