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***RUSSIA RISING: PUTIN'S FOREIGN POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA***, By Richard Dietrich\*, Published by I. B. Tauris, Year of Publishing: 2021. Subject Area: Russian Foreign Policy, Russia in the Middle East. Book Type: Political/Military Analysis . Total Number of Pages: 224. ISBN: 978-0755636648, paperback, \$27.00.

*Russia Rising* is a collection of articles by fourteen authors on different aspects of Russian foreign policy in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). It is organized in four sections: the introduction and then Parts I-III. While the majority of articles discuss topics related to current Russian foreign policy in the Middle East, the two articles that make up Part I: “Russia in the Middle East: From the Soviet Union to Putin” provide a historical overview of Russian involvement and policy in the MENA region. The remaining two sections, Part II: “Russian Policy in Action” and Part III: “Regional Partnerships” treat Russian activities and partnerships in the MENA region under Putin.

The four articles that make up Part II discuss Russia’s military operations in Syria, the lack of Russian operations against Daesh (ISIS) in Syria, Russian arms sales/transfers to the Middle East, and its energy diplomacy in the region.

Part III is comprised of eight articles and is devoted to Russia’s relations with various states and organizations in the MENA region. Two articles examine the links between Russia and Iran, and Iranian-supported groups in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq. The remaining articles cover Turkey, the Gulf States, Israel, Egypt and North Africa, with the book’s final article providing an overview and evaluation of Russia’s position vis-à-vis the countries of the MENA region.

While the articles that make up this work are all well written and thought-provoking, one of the strong points of *Russia Rising* is the authors of these articles. The authors come from a variety of backgrounds and work at various universities or institutions in the United States, Europe and Russia. As a result, the articles provide information and analysis from several distinct viewpoints rather than a purely American, European or Russian perspective.

Another point that makes *Russia Rising* a significant work is its date of publication. Appearing in

2021, it provides a very good picture of Russia's position and activities in the MENA region only months before the current conflict in Ukraine began. As a result, future researchers examining the impact of the war in Ukraine on Russia's position, influence and/or activities in the MENA region can use this book as a basis of comparison for Russia's post-war situation.

In summary, *Russia Rising* is a well-researched, well-written collection of articles written by specialists in their fields. It provides a very comprehensive view of Russian policies, activities and goals in the MENA region up through 2021 and is a very good source for comparing any changes that may occur due to the war in Ukraine.

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