

Saudi Arabia

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Saudi Arabia is considered authoritarian from independence in 1927 through 1945. We lack Geddes authoritarian regime type coding, but according to Morby (2002) the country was ruled by the Saudi dynasty, so we consider the country a monarchy. The U.S. Department of State notes: "The king's powers are limited because he must observe the Shari'a and other Saudi traditions. He also must retain a consensus of the Saudi royal family, religious leaders (ulema), and other important elements in Saudi society. In the past the leading members of the royal family chose the king from among themselves with the subsequent approval of the ulema."

According to the Dept. of State "The modern Saudi kingdom was founded by the late King Abdul Aziz Al Saud (known internationally as Ibn Saud, or "Son of Saud"). In 1902, Abdul Aziz recaptured Riyadh, the Al Saud dynasty's ancestral capital, from the rival Al-Rashid family. Continuing his conquests, Abdul Aziz subdued Al-Hasa in the east, the rest of the central Nejd region, and the Hijaz along the Red Sea coast between 1913 and 1926. In 1932, Abdul Aziz declared these regions unified as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia." COW codes Saudi Arabia as independent starting in 1927. Aziz stayed in power through 1953 with no SOLS changes.

In 1953 Aziz died and was succeeded by his son King Saud. This is not a SOLS change. In 1964 Saud abdicated in favor of his half-brother Faisal, who had been Prime Minister and mostly controlled the country since 1958. "Proclaimed King in 1964 by senior royal family members and religious leaders, Faisal also continued to serve as Prime Minister. This practice has been followed by subsequent kings" (U.S. Department of State). This is not a SOLS change. In 1975 Faisal was assassinated and was succeeded by his half-brother Khalid as both King and PM. In 1982 Khalid died and was succeeded by his half-brother Fahd, who had been Crown Prince and Deputy PM. Fahd suffered a stroke in 1995 and his half-brother Abdullah, who had been Crown Prince and Deputy PM, took over the running of the government in 1996 and became King after Fahd's death in 2005. This is not a SOLS change. All of the rulers were members of the Saud dynasty.

References:

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