

The Power and the People: Paths of Resistance in the Middle East

Charles Tripp



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This book is about power. The power wielded over others - by absolute monarchs, tyrannical totalitarian regimes and military occupiers - and the power of the people who resist and deny their rulers' claims to that authority by whatever means. The extraordinary events in the Middle East in 2011 offered a vivid example of how non-violent demonstration can topple seemingly invincible rulers. Drawing on these dramatic events and parallel moments in the modern history of the Middle East, from the violent uprisings in Algeria against the French in the early twentieth century, to revolution in Iran in 1979, and the Palestinian intifada, the book considers the ways in which the people have united to unseat their oppressors and fight against the status quo to shape a better future. The book also probes the relationship between power and forms of resistance and how common experiences of violence and repression create new collective identities. Nowhere is this more strikingly exemplified than in the art of the Middle East, its posters and graffiti, and its provocative installations which are discussed in the concluding chapter. This brilliant, yet unsettling book affords a panoramic view of the twentieth and twenty-first century Middle East through occupation, oppression, and political resistance.

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