



Cities of Salt

By *Abdelrahman Munif*

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Banned in Saudi Arabia, this is a blistering look at Arab and American hypocrisy following the discovery of oil in a poor oasis community.

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Cities of Salt By Abdelrahman Munif Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #100867 in Books
- Brand: Munif, Abdelrahman
- Published on: 1989-07-17
- Released on: 1989-07-17
- Format: International Edition
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x 1.28" w x 5.14" l,
- Binding: Paperback
- 640 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Originally published in Beirut in 1984, this multipage epic brings to life many of the political issues that have plagued the Mideast for most of this century. Set in an unnamed gulf country that could be Jordan sometime in the 1930s, the novel relates what happens to the bedouin inhabitants of the small oasis community of Wadi al-Uyoun when oil is discovered by Americans. Seen through the eyes of a large and varied cast of bedouin characters, the upheaval caused by the American colonization is shown in various manifestations, from the first contact with the strange foreigners ("Their smell could kill birds!" observes Miteb al-Hathal, who later leads a rebellion of Arab workers when the village of Harran has been made into an American port city) to confused and suspicious descriptions of the sinister "magic" tools brought by the Americans which are in fact bulldozers, automobiles, radios and telephones. The story unfolds at a stately pace over a timespan of many years and provides an endless stream of characters and events, each connected to the next by many threads of plot. Theroux's sensitive translation conveys the subtleties of ambiguity and nuance inherent to the Arab language and culture. Banned in several Mideast countries including Saudi Arabia, this is the first volume of a planned trilogy by a Paris-based Jordanian novelist who holds a law degree from the Sorbonne and a Ph.D. in oil economics from the University of Belgrade. Despite the Lawrence of Arabia setting, Munif writes from a unique vantage point; English-language readers have been given few opportunities before now to look at this situation through native eyes.

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From Library Journal

Banned in several Middle Eastern countries, this novel records the encounter between Americans and Arabs in an unnamed Gulf emirate in the 1930s. As oil exploration begins, the destruction of an oasis community amounts to "a breaking off, like death, that nothing and no one could ever heal." The promise inherent in the creation of a city divided into Arab and American sectors provides the novel's most striking revelation: here not merely two cultures, but two ages, meet and stand apart. Alternatively amused and bewildered by the Americans and their technological novelties, the Arabs sense in their accommodation to modernity the betrayal of their own traditions. Highly recommended, if only for its cross-cultural insights. L.M. Lewis, Eastern Kentucky Univ., Richmond

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Review

"The only serious work of fiction that tries to show the effect of oil, Americans and the local oligarchy on a Gulf country."--Edward W. Said

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Charles Carey:

Have you spare time for the day? What do you do when you have considerably more or little spare time? That's why, you can choose the suitable activity with regard to spend your time. Any person spent their spare time to take a move, shopping, or went to typically the Mall. How about open or even read a book eligible Cities of Salt? Maybe it is being best activity for you. You understand beside you can spend your time together with your favorite's book, you can cleverer than before. Do you agree with its opinion or you have

additional opinion?

Marlin Brogan:

Are you kind of busy person, only have 10 or maybe 15 minute in your moment to upgrading your mind ability or thinking skill also analytical thinking? Then you are receiving problem with the book in comparison with can satisfy your short period of time to read it because all of this time you only find publication that need more time to be study. Cities of Salt can be your answer mainly because it can be read by anyone who have those short free time problems.

Louise Perez:

Reading a book for being new life style in this year; every people loves to go through a book. When you read a book you can get a wide range of benefit. When you read publications, you can improve your knowledge, simply because book has a lot of information into it. The information that you will get depend on what types of book that you have read. If you want to get information about your analysis, you can read education books, but if you want to entertain yourself read a fiction books, this kind of us novel, comics, along with soon. The Cities of Salt will give you a new experience in looking at a book.

Preston Garza:

Don't be worry in case you are afraid that this book may filled the space in your house, you could have it in e-book method, more simple and reachable. This particular Cities of Salt can give you a lot of buddies because by you investigating this one book you have matter that they don't and make a person more like an interesting person. That book can be one of a step for you to get success. This book offer you information that maybe your friend doesn't learn, by knowing more than different make you to be great folks. So , why hesitate? We need to have Cities of Salt.

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